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NEW STATESMAN

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That Ye Be Not Judged

The Attorney-General of the moment, Mr Sam Silkin, has a long record of acceding to pressure for frivolous and expensive prosecutions which do not match any reasonable definition of the public interest. This paper has attacked him for his attitude towards conspiracy laws against dissent, and for the attempt at back-door censorship of the Crossman *Diaries*. If we defend him now, it is simply because he has chosen to stick to an immutable principle – that the judges cannot use their courts to override Parliament. In order to make this point it is not necessary to stress what everybody knows to be true: that if judges did have that power we would live in an unrecognisably conservative society. It happens to be the case that at every opportunity, from Tameside education to Freddie Laker's air franchise, the Bench has attempted to thwart a Labour government. But one would have to say the same even if (as never occurs) the judges put spokes in a Tory wheel. It is none of their business to grant weekend injunctions to the 'National Association for Freedom' when the Attorney-General has decided not to proceed. Perhaps from now on Labour will not be so slavishly conformist in its appointments to the judiciary, and will not insist on vindicating John Gay and his *Beggar's Opera* where

> The charge is prepar'd; the lawyers all met
> The Judges all rang'd (a terrible show!)

Other points of substance arise. If the Union of Post Office Workers were carrying out a vendetta, and an interested party took them to law claiming victimisation, that would be one thing and the Attorney-General would be in dereliction for not having done it himself. If the union takes token action on a matter of conscience, and is taken up by a rabidly reactionary pressure group, that would be (and is) quite another. In either case, of course, it would follow naturally that the union be fined for what it did.

Mr Silkin maintained during his statement – despite facetious interruptions from Lord Justice Ormrod – that he was building on well-established precedent. He should not be left just to speak for himself. Lord Simon, a bitter enemy of trade unionism if ever there was one, told the Commons 50 years ago that:

> There is no greater nonsense talked about the Attorney-General's duty than the suggestion that in all cases the Attorney-General ought to decide to prosecute merely because he thinks there is what the lawyers call 'a case'. It is not true, and no one who has held the office supposes that it is.

Lord (then Sir Hartley) Shawcross echoed the same point in 1951 when he reminded his hearers that the effect on public morale and order was a prime consideration in deciding on the authorisation of a prosecution. Is anybody seriously claiming that the decision of a British trade union to associate itself with an international protest against tyranny is of a type to raise such questions? The answer to that question is yes, there are people who suffer agonies at the thought of such ideas taking root in the workforce (who, after all, are supposed to shut up and get on with their work).

The NAF, for one, has consistently made clear what kind of 'freedom' it prefers. The columns of its paper are adorned with frequent complimentary references to South Africa and Rhodesia. It took the UPW to court over a sympathy strike involving a firm where trade union membership was not permitted at all. Do the judges take Saturday morning sessions in order to appease this kind of plaintiff?

The checking and limiting of arbitrary judicial power is more vital now than ever before. The Tories and their allies run the risk of discrediting the whole idea by their attempt to confuse it with a 'Bill of Rights' to protect public schools, non-union firms, property rights and the like. One of the great victories of the open society, which had to be fought for hard and long, was to remove the lowering shadow of Bleak House from the lives of the common people. Let Parliament decide, then, and let its law officers resist old judges who get above themselves.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

A Tribute to Dennis Skinner

Incorruptible, exemplary, enviably certain – there's a sterile virtuousness in Dennis Skinner. He is not quite of this world. He belongs more properly to the French Revolution, as Citizen Skinner, the tribune of the people. Of course it would not be long before his head hit the basket. And in the same way that, when one has turned off the radio, there is sometimes a brief moment of continued volume or, when the power cuts out on the stereo, the record carries on a few seconds longer, so would the severed head of Skinner continue to speak during its passage through the air. 'For the life of me, Mr Speaker,' the head would say, 'I cannot understand why . . .'

The inability of Skinner to understand the shortcomings of Westminster, human nature and the Labour Party, his aggressive innocence, has a positive, invigorating force. On no account will Skinner understand. To understand, after all, is to forgive. The uncompromising path he has chosen, on which he must travel most of the time alone, has brought him already to fame and respect of a kind. But it will not lead him to office or power. He does not seek office, of course – he seems to see it as an evil in itself – but one is entitled to wonder just what he hopes to achieve, and how. Where will Skinner be ten or 20 years hence? Will sterile virtuousness have triumphed? Will the Labour benches be crowded with Skinners? Will the bars be empty and the smoking room lie silent? And, if so, how will this have come about?

What Skinner could not for the life of him see, on Monday afternoon, was why the house should adjourn in memory of Eden. Oh he could see why the *Tories* should want to do so, but not Labour. It was a marvellous moment as he rose to make his speech, and the Opposition walked out muttering 'Disgraceful!' One thought for a few seconds that he was going to speak against the dead man's memory – but it was worse than that. The memory meant nothing to him. There was a lot of business in hand. The back benches had little enough time to express their point of view, and the Devolution Bill was going to take a long time. Skinner was not interested in convention, he was interested in change, and he attacked Michael Foot (who turned huffily away) for deciding to adjourn the House.

The speech was one of the best I have so far heard in Parliament – partly because of its being made at all, partly because of the passion with which it was delivered (which came over as genuine), and partly because of the way it articulated an authentic Skinnerian theme. An MP (a Labour MP) should behave in a way which is not offensive to his working constituency. 'When I walk into this building,' he said, I want in some way, although I cannot do it exactly as I like, to show that those on these benches – I am not worried about the honourable Members opposite –' (here Skinner more or less turned his back on the Tories and addressed himself exclusively to Labour, he chose his words very carefully and one wondered how this rather long sentence was going to end) 'want to *synchronise* with the attitudes of those we represent.' When he had been working down the pit, the National Coal Board had begged people to stay at work and not down tools in the event of a fatal accident – however horrible the accident might be. It was offensive that miners should be asked to give up such a tradition while MPs should maintain theirs.

This striking, somewhat outrageous, comparison between the demise of a Prime Minister 20 years after his retirement and the violent death of a miner at work, was no doubt intended to jolt. It had the effect of suggesting what Skinner would not have been allowed to say, that everything which had been said in praise of Eden meant nothing to him whatsoever, had nothing to do with his world, nothing to do with his values. That he saw nothing to respect, and no reason to mourn.

Almost alone on the Opposition benches sat Enoch Powell, his shoulders hunched in an attitude of intense concentration. When he rose to speak it was first of all to compliment Skinner as an enemy of humbug, and then to take issue with him. Those who hate humbug, said Powell, should realise that sometimes what appears humbug to them is not so to other people. Those who speak on behalf of working people make a mistake if they assume that history, tradition and precedent are incomprehensible to workers.

Classic Skinnerism versus classic Powellism – two faces of working-class politics today. And indeed, as Powell had perceived, the argument itself is classic. Who speaks for the workers? The man who mourns Eden or the man who refuses to mourn? Is it likely that, in housing estates up and down the country, tongues are clicking because the Commons adjourned early? If the argument arose at all, would it not be considered utterly appropriate for the appropriate gesture to be made? Was not Eden a popular and respected politician?

Of course he was. The Skinnerian argument is bound to fail against the Powellite as long as it bases itself on a romantic projection of the working class movement. The traditions of the pit are not the traditions of the working class as a whole. Nor is socialism the single, dominant tradition of the working class in Britain. Nor has it ever been. To say this is not to deny the validity of socialism – it is to argue in favour of better arguments.

One good reason for not mourning Eden, for instance, is his behaviour over the forcible repatriation of 'Russian nationals' in 1944. There were thousands of them. Eden did not want them left on our hands. He knew that to send them back to Stalin's Russia would be to send many to their deaths, but he argued that the British could not afford to be 'sentimental' about this. There is no view of such behaviour alive in the *tradition* of British socialism because the whole episode remained secret until recently. Lord Longford wrote in the *Observer* on Sunday that Eden was not the sort of man to avoid a controversy, but this is not true. When Nicholas Bethell came to write *The Last Secret* Eden refused to help his researches, claiming that he had forgotten the circumstances of the decision. He also refused to participate in a television programme on the same subject. Another controversy Eden fudged, as Hugh Thomas writes in this issue, was Suez.

The word Suez, which has come to be a almost technical term in the discussion of modern British history, was used sparingly in Monday's tributes. Jim Callaghan grasped the nettle – for a while, until he found that it stung. His formulation, that Eden was the victim rather than the villain, must have struck him as pretty neat. Yet if a man with such personal power and responsibility (secret responsibility) is considered to be merely swept along by events when things have gone wrong, what about when things went right? If Eden is not to be blamed for Suez, is he nevertheless to be praised for everything else?

Ted Heath's formulation was similar: put yourself in his position, he appeared to be saying – if you had been Eden, would you not have done the same thing? This is however no more than a tautology. If I had been Eden, I am perfectly sure that I would also have been, as Heath told us, the first in this country to recognise Cézanne. I might even have picked up a few for the odd bob. Mrs Thatcher's tribute was one of her worst major efforts to date, although she has a pretty voice when reading poetry (in this case Rupert Brooke).

Here is all she said about Suez:

> In overseas matter, his judgments on the Middle East were, and will be, the subject of debate for many years, but that the principle aim of his every action and policy was the benefit of Britain and the good of the international community has never been in dispute.

Now *that's* neat!

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Alexander Cockburn

Mr Carter Comes to Town

Most Americans, in this week of the Inauguration and the birth of a new presidency, have been concentrating on two fairly timeless topics: death and the weather. It has been bitterly cold since the turn of the year – the first really bad winter in some time. This has symbolic and actual applications. The Carter people, always keen for some uplift on the cheap, have been making much of the fact that one of the reviewing stands in Washington is being heated by solar energy. It has simultaneously been recognised that the device, given the temperature, just isn't up to the job. More conventional sources of warmth have also been installed.

Cheap, clean solar power on the one hand; wrecked, polluting Liberian tankers, nuclear reactors, strip mines and spiralling natural gas prices on the other: dream and reality. Traditionally, Inaugurations are occasions on which dreams are given pride of place. Carter comes to town with reality conspicuously at his elbow. And new frontiers looking gloomily familiar.

Lack of general uplift may also be ascribed to one piece of bad luck for the incoming team. Aside from the weather a prominent topic has naturally been the terminal moments and eventual demise of Gary Gilmore at the hands of a firing squad in Utah last Monday morning. A nation gathering itself to spring lithely into the future should surely not prepare itself for the experience by contemplating the squalid drama of a murderer finally triumphing in his bid to die, with his family and film producer observing and then describing in detail his actual execution.

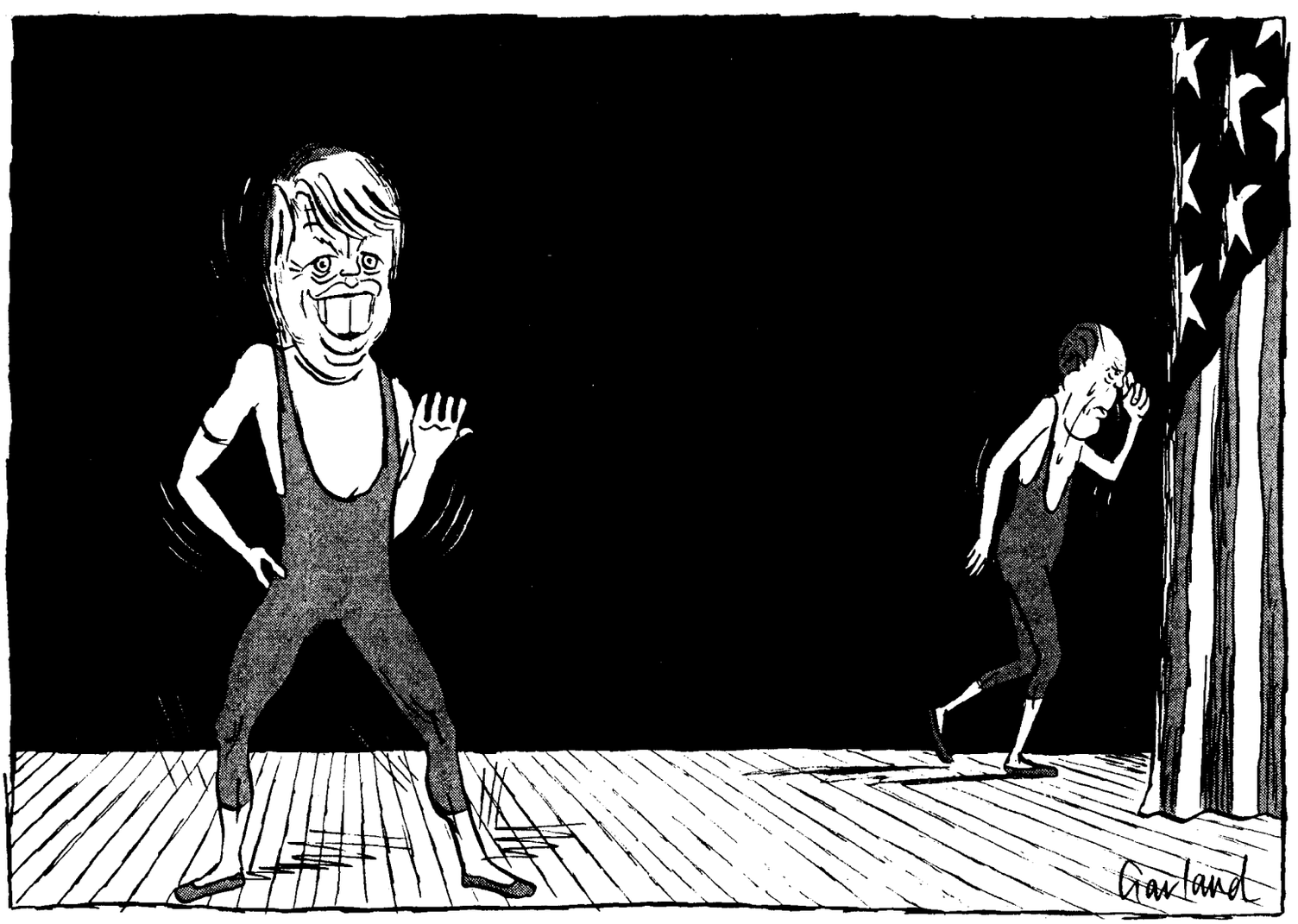
Hardly had Gilmore's body been rushed to a hospital so that some intact organs could be removed and transplanted into fortunate legatees of his remains than attention shifted to Texas where another murderer is about to be electrocuted. This time, failure of all appeals permitting, television cameras will be in attendance and the deterrent spectacle relayed to the citizenry. It is unclear as yet whether parental guidance in viewing will be advised. Logic may well prevail over emotions: children forced to watch the man fry and stay in the paths of righteousness as a result.

Let us turn to Edmund Burke to underline the connection between the ceremony of Inauguration and the death spectacles completed and still pending. In his essay *On the Sublime and the Beautiful* Burke wrote:

> Choose a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have: appoint the most favourite actors: spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations: unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting and music: and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of execution in the adjoining square: in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of real sympathy.

Real sympathy being much the same now as it was in the 18th century, Carter has a hard act with which to compete. As a dream, with the freshness of morning dew on him, he might have more of a chance. But, as I said, reality is at his elbow and he only has himself to blame if enthusiasm is less than universal.

Carter steps into the White House flanked by a cabinet replete with hacks, cronies and retreads of the Kennedy-Johnson era. So resolutely Right of Centre is this cabinet that we have been offered the truly ridiculous spectacle of having his Secretary of Defence and his nominee for director of Intelligence being attacked as liberals. Dr Harold Brown, certain to be installed in



'I really need this job, please God, I need this job.' – A Chorus Line

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the Pentagon, advocated terror bombing of the civilian population of North Vietnam when he was Secretary of the Air Force in the late Sixties. The only trace of 'liberalism' which could be discerned in his make-up was that he had not wholly discounted the notion of détente or the usefulness of the SALT talks. Ted Sorensen has now been forced to stand down as prospective head of the CIA, allegedly because he removed classified documents from the Kennedy White House and took a tax write-off when he gave them to the national archives. He is now being touted as a liberal martyr – an odd situation for the man who counselled Robert Kennedy not to come out against the war in 1967 and who has been an energetic counsel for multinational corporations in recent times.

Such is the thin material with which conservative Republicans in Congress have been working during the confirmation hearings. The course that Sorensen's withdrawal followed nicely exhibits where power really lies. The CIA and other powerful interests simply did not want Sorensen around. Their will immediately prevailed. Contrast this episode with the fortunes of Judge Griffin Bell, Carter's nominee for Attorney-General, and the utter failure of liberals to disturb his confirmation.

During his campaign for the presidency Carter suggested turning the position of Attorney-General into a six-year non-political appointment free from White House pressure. Instead, in the great tradition of Robert Kennedy and John Mitchell, he appointed a crony from the Atlanta law firm of his closest adviser, Charles Kirbo. Bell was not a distinguished judge before he pleaded poverty and went to work with Kirbo. Following his nomination he lied about his endorsement of a racist judge Nixon once tried to appoint to the Supreme Court. Furthermore he exhibited reluctance to resign from white-only clubs in Atlanta.

It would be tedious to run through all Carter's appointments, but for a précis we may note that his cabinet includes three directors of IBM, four members of the Trilateral Commission (sponsored originally by David Rockefeller) and two members of the executive committee of the Rockefeller Foundation. The firm of Coca-Cola need not feel that it lacks a friend in the White House – the Atlanta-based company can observe its former counsel in Washington, Joseph Califano, appointed Secretary of HEW, its (Atlanta) law firm of King Spaulding at the President's elbow in the forms of Griffin Bell and Charles Kirbo – and a former executive now appointed deputy Secretary of Defence.

What brave dreams can Carter gesture to in the first moments of his presidency? His campaign opposition to nuclear power will surely be somewhat muted, since James Schlesinger – a noted advocate of nuclear power under Nixon – is now his energy Tsar. His spasmodic opposition to the B-1 bomber is evidently being rapidly extinguished by Harold Brown. Price controls – touted during the campaign – vanished the moment a steel company raised its prices in December. Carter, unnerved by the inflationary menace, promised he would never even think of price controls again.

But, most of all, Carter asked for trust and promised to speak for the underprivileged. One of his first appointments was that of his personal banker, Bert Lance, as Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Lance's first big announcement as Budget Director was to correct Jimmy Carter's priority campaign promise to reduce unemployment to 6.5 per cent by the end of 1977. Lance thought that was a little too ambitious.

Insiders are coming back to power in Washington now, in the shape of the me who gave us Vietnam in the 1960s. Ou siders are coming to Washington in th shape of men who so far have not bee given a chance to get their hands inside th cookie jar. The air is scarcely cracklin with promise. Brave words are being spoke this week, but the honeymoon is really ove before the bridegroom steps out of th church.

Washington

David Leitch

The Tower of Chirac

By a happy coincidence, an hour after President Giscard finished his fifth full-scale press conference since taking office, I had an appointment with a lady called Lydie Gerbaud on the 32nd floor of the most notorious skyscraper in Paris, the Maine-Montparnasse Tower. There is much to be said for being inside this 56-floor horror at any time, since it is the only place in Paris where the vast and unbeautiful silhouette of the building itself, a tribute to the speculative greed and growth-madness of that long-gone 1960s decade, is itself completely invisible. Instead of being obliged to look at it, you can look out of it. And below, ant-like traffic jams acquire the geometric beauty of extreme distance.

Ms Gerbaud, who has seen all this and much more in the course of a long career dedicated to Gaullist politics, was as usual being very helpful – no mean achievement in itself since the freshly installed phones in what has just become the headquarters of Jacques Chirac's spanking new political party were ting-a-linging as implacably as the bells of hell. They all wanted to know the same thing, even after Ms Gerbaud had issued a statement via Agence France Presse giving the answer, or rather explaining that for 48 hours there would be no answer to give. For Jacques Chirac, working further down the corridor, had just brought off the most impressive coup since his party (or 'movement' as the faithful prefer) was launched before Christmas in the exhibition hall at the Porte de Versailles. (An occasion when the RPR, or *Rassemblement pour la République*, lived up to its name by attracting over 50,000 participants, 30,000 of whom made the pilgrimage from the provinces, not to mention 558 accredited journalists, 19 TV networks, 16 radio stations, 65 press agencies, and 98 top-level diplomatic observers, including Sir Nicholas Henderson, our own Ambassador.)

Unlike every other important – and some not so important – political leader in France, the insistent callers were repetitively told, Chirac had absolutely no, repeat no, comment to make about the French President's 90-minute 'High Mass of Communication' with the national and world press. Instead, minutes after this much awaited occasion which Giscard's aides had promised would bring a (much needed) 'clarification' of France's currently obscure and discouraging political situation, the Chirac camp had managed to set up a specia session at the Hôtel Matignon, Chirac's prime-ministerial residence until 25 August last year, when he quit, with the man whom Giscard appointed to succeed him: Raymond Barre. Only after the ex-Prime Minister had conferred with the current one, was it agreed that the waiting world might get to know where the RPR planned to go next.

All kinds of political advantages, it could be seen, accrued from this device. It provided 48 hours, apart from anything else, to decide what should be said. It also implicitly served to underline that Chirac was somehow special, not just another politician trying to cash in on what is getting to look like a vacuum of power. But a privileged servant of the state called in for consultations in times of crisis.

The effectiveness of the ploy was soon proved in practice. TV networks and the press, including *Le Figaro*, almost the only paper nowadays which can find so much as a tepid – as opposed to an acid – phrase to describe the President, treated the Chirac-Barre meeting as the major political development emerging from the Giscard conference. The RPR, from the 32nd floor of their tower, had managed to give the impression that it was here, and not in the Elysée Palace, where the real action was, and given those 90 *Giscardien* minutes it was easy to see why. Almost the only comment he managed which was entirely to the point came when he said that the French were worried and preoccupied by the current political confusion. 'Doubt and confusion lead to uncertainty', he remarked with circular perspicacity. 'The uncertainty makes the crisis worse, and thus the aggravation of the crisis in turn once more justifies the confusion and the doubt.' His conference, he said, was intended to break the depressive spiral.

It seems to be a rule of French political life that the longer a President stays in office the more verbose he becomes. This *Giscardien* idea – that the French are suffering from a kind of national morosity, as if they had all got out of bed on the wrong side – is by no means new. It is now simply expressed with greater complexity. At the end of 1975, faced with falling birth-rate statistics, Giscard chose to talk, not about

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the pill or abortion or changing social habits, but 'a sort of collective pessimism'. This insistence on mood, rather than the objective factors which might be thought to engender it, creates an unfortunate impression of passivity. We have come a long way from the heady election days of 1974 when no Paris wall went undecorated with a photograph of a man looking easily 20 years younger than Giscard does now, and the announcement that here was the new captain either at the helm or holding the rudder, depending on your nautical preference.

Nowadays the impression is not of a skipper, but of a professor – and something dangerously like a professor emeritus at that. Since rationalisation is one of the major national virtues, it is not surprising that the President has found a formula to explain the split in the majority which is supposed to confer legitimacy on his own office. The crude word 'split' is eschewed. Instead the modish phrase is 'pluralism'. And when talking about the elections of both this year and next he likes to cite 'a pluralistic impulse which spreads and organises itself rather than a unity which tears itself to bits'.

Here, students of language or French affairs may cry joyfully, is the very stuff which seminars devoted to political science are made of. But what of the common man (particularly if he is unemployed, which is far from unlikely?) and what, moreover of the common voter? He may well conclude that the Giscard boat is sinking of sheer inanition.

The only moment when the President seemed to remember such an animal exists came with the inevitable question about France's (truly deplorable) handling of what is now the Abu Daoud affair. 'French dignity and honour have been attacked', Giscard said. There were countries, he added, which 'cannot accept that France conducts an independent political policy'. And for the first time in public he expressed the anger against the international press which he has long been fulminating over in semi-private. 'Our foreign policy is not made by international press newsrooms. Neither our country, our people, nor our laws need lessons from anyone outside.'

After this Gaullist-style outburst there were officials ready to explain that they had been 'set up' by Israel, who warned French counter-intelligence services of Daoud's imminent arrival, and even specified the name he was using on his phoney Iraqui passport. If they had wanted him so badly, why hadn't they simply assassinated him with the brutal efficiency that put an end to Mahmoud Saleh, the PLO Paris fixer whose obsequies Daoud visited France to attend?

Not long ago Chirac was as dirty a word as could be uttered in *Giscardien* circles. After the President's latest performance a change is already under way. Raymond Barre may ostensibly lead the 'pluralistic' majority when they take on the Left next year. But if this majority manages to win, then it will be no doubt thanks to the recently anathematised but perhaps soon entirely respectable populist politician of the Right, currently occupying the 32nd floor of that appalling Montparnasse tower.

Paris

Victoria Brittain

Algeria's New Model

From next month Algerian politics, which have been run for 11½ years by a particular tight little group of army officers, will be different. On 4 February a National Assembly will be elected for the first time since Boumedienne's coup in 1965. Why are they allowing this wary resuscitation of public political life? Will civilians be allowed to wield real power again?

Algeria is not a country that it is easy to know much about. Colonel Boumedienne and the other officers on the Council of the Revolution were shaped by the long grim war for independence from France. They have run their country with no constitution, no state institutions and a controlled press, and have thus successfully discouraged anyone from trying to start political musical chairs. Eleven-and-a-half years is a long time, especially for politicians in Africa, and they look as steady in the saddle now as they have ever done. So why change the political formula now? The answer must be that they calculated last spring, when opposition surfaced within the country, that a new deal was the price for maintaining domestic stability and for seeing Algeria's vulnerable economy through the world crisis.

The old wartime ideal of collective leadership has not been dropped, but in the weeks before Boumedienne's election as President last December it was apparently decided that some appearance of an election campaign was necessary (Boumedienne was the only candidate), and a few of the trappings of a standard African personality cult were, uneasily, allowed to develop – lots of photographs, marches and quotations.

Algeria's leaders are a secretive, clever, arrogant group of men with great ambitions for their country and its status in the world. Their collective genius has been to weld together disparate, poor, backward little countries into a sort of Third World trade union to get a better deal out of the rich. To them Europe can be dismissed as social-democrat and half-hearted. They see themselves as in the forefront of history. And Algeria has, in fact, as good a claim as any other country to have formulated the Third World view of the world which is the main development in international affairs since decolonisation and the American defeat in Indochina. In the new patterns of power politics at the United Nations, in oil, and in the deadlocked North-South talks in Paris, Algeria's voice is heard, even if the Algerians' view of their own importance has been gradually getting a bit too much for other Third World countries who are fed up with being bullied into line. It was typical that when the Arabs moved in to get the French to release Abu Daoud, the Algerian ambassador led the delegation to the Quai d'Orsay and immediately offered hospitality to the Palestinian.

By late 1975 scoring at home and abroad by pushing Third World demands was no longer what it used to be. At the same time all the money from Opec's huge pay rise to its members had gone into a jacked-up industrialisation programme and debts were mounting. Finally, the Algerians did what they have rarely done – backed a loser. Instead of admitting that no one could stop King Hassan of Morocco from grabbing the Spanish Sahara after Spain left, they stood by their principles (which are also those of the UN and the Organisation of African Unity) and threatened war. Although the Sahara affair is not over and the Moroccans are still having to fight off an Algerian-backed guerrilla movement in the desert, the Algerians have failed to persuade Africa, Arabia and Eastern Europe that the Polisario Front is the new PLO. A few friends were lost and many diplomatic toes trodden on in the process.

So the energy and attention of Algeria's leaders was turned inwards last year. Last spring the gradual change to a more open political life began as Boumedienne's personal gamble. The critical point came in March when opposition to his regime surfaced inside Algeria for the first time in the form of a tract denouncing him as a despot. (He overthrew Ahmed Ben Bella – still under house arrest – in 1965 because he had made power 'personal'.) The tract was written by two former premiers of wartime provisional governments, Ferhat Abbas and Youssef Ben Khedda, and also signed by two other men of the same vintage.

Police control is tight in Algeria and the police were in the offices of the news agencies which got the tract within half an hour of Ben Khedda bringing it in himself. The four elderly men were put under house arrest and could not be contacted by telephone. But Boumedienne's response after a couple of days was not the complete censure of the affair most people expected. He decided instead – typically – to double the stakes. The government press carried editorials attacking unnamed 'bourgeois reactionaries' and then Boumedienne referred to the tract in a speech and took the risk of calling for an open debate on his regime's aims and achievements set out in a national charter. Corruption, inefficiency and public mismanagement were then daily aired in public meetings, in the papers and on television in a way previously unthinkable.

Since the great debate of last May the government press has kept attacking some of the more obviously unsatisfactory aspects of Algerian life, such as a silly campaign to paint out all French words on public signs, or indeed the persistent shortages. Recently there was a month without meat in the capital, three months without baby cereal, or car tyres, or cement, and weeks without (at the same time) sugar, tinned milk, rice, potatoes and spaghetti.

Bad planning and bureaucratic Catch 22s take a toll on human happiness in Algeria.

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The Industry and Energy Minister, Belaid Abdesselam, has repeatedly won his case for crash industrialisation while the oil lasts, at the expense of housing and social services. Somebody put the counter-argument, saying they had seen children during last summer's big water shortage with little cans catching the drips from the humidity extractors in the computer room of Sonatrach, the state oil and gas company. Last autumn the planners got their sums wrong and Algiers University found itself with 4,000 extra students. All were without lodgings and, with average room occupancy in such areas as the old Turkish-built Casbah reaching eight people a room, with little hope of finding them. Eventually there was a small demo and extra beds crammed into overcrowded dormitories were burned.

Discontent is made worse by the proximity of France and the Algerians' familiarity with what it has to offer (there are 800,000 of them there now). The Algerian answer to the problem of how you keep the young doctors and administrators down in the desert after they've studied in Paris is to offer them a place in the revolution, and a state car, and make the revolution open to change by civilians through the party and the coming Assembly.

The deputies will, of course, be handpicked. Two candidates per seat from the only political party is what the voters have to choose from. But once elected, according to the new constitution, they will be able to grill ministers on things like why so many agricultural reforms have become production disasters and why so many factories are still only working at 30 per cent of capacity. Such answerability in public could make quite a difference on its own. The possibility of a disinterested and courageous voice raising itself can never be ruled out.

The assembly election has meant the revival of the party – the wartime Front de Libération Nationale (FLN). Boumedienne himself destroyed the party within a month of the 1965 coup as it represented a dangerous second channel of power besides the army which was his power base. He attacked Ben Bella for being surrounded by muddled ideologists who distracted him from getting on with post-independence reconstruction. Boumedienne himself, however (to the relief of the Western and Eastern European communist parties who have repeatedly told him that you can't get socialism without building a party first) is now to follow Ben Bella in becoming the secretary-general of the revamped FLN.

After a party congress (promised for late this year) the real arguments over policy will switch from the Council of the Revolution (to be abolished) and the cabinet, to a party politburo. The party will then be in a position to challenge the army, which has got used to the comfortable position of being the aristocracy of Boumedienne's Algeria. The gamble he is taking is tough: can he keep the army's loyalty while appealing to a much wider constituency?

Corinna Adam

The 'Refuseniks' Lobby

In a corner of the Labour MP Greville Janner's agreeably untidy study in Golders Green stands one of his most valued possessions. It looks like a complex room-heater: it is in fact an elaborate telephone-cum-tape recorder. Mechanically, it has been Mr Janner's greatest ally in the campaign for the release of Soviet Jews.

Until recently the campaigners were fairly discreet about the extent to which they relied on the telephone, particularly since direct dialling to the Soviet Union was introduced three years ago (75p a minute to Moscow, now.) They did not publicise the fact, for fear of alienating the Soviet authorities still further and – more important – harming the recipients of the calls. Those days are past. As far as Mr Janner knows, all the 'refuseniks' – Jews who have applied more than once to go to Israel and been turned down – have either had their telephones cut off or live in daily fear of it happening. And, according to another campaigner, it is much more difficult to get through. Numbers are permanently engaged or unobtainable, and the operator merely says, unconvincingly, 'All the lines to Kiev (or whatever) are fully booked.'

To those whose capacity for sympathy is limited, or who have political doubts about the uses to which the anti-Soviet propaganda is sometimes put, the pro-Soviet Jews campaign may seem to have been going on for an immensely long time, and to be increasingly successful. Neither is true. The movement started, effectively, only six years ago this month: and its supporters are anxious about its prospects – their figures show that the situation is getting worse rather than better. On the 31st of this month, indeed, there will be an international day of protest against the continued imprisonment of one of the best-known Soviet endocrinologists – the Jew Dr Mikhail Stern, who is 57 and in very poor health; he has been in jail now for three years.

Jews in Britain and elsewhere had, of course, known for much longer than six years that the position of Soviet Jews ranged from the difficult to the tragic. But the original impetus for the campaign does seem to have come from within Russia itself, despite the proclaimed view of most of the Arabist lobby that it is an Israeli-inspired exercise. In one sense, it is literally Israeli-inspired: sparked off simply by the Six Days' War. One is told that during the summer of 1967 Jewish consciousness in the Soviet Union was suddenly and dramatically raised.

One theory is that this was due to sheer clumsiness on the part of the Soviet authorities. Their reports of the progress of the war were so different from those provided by Western radio – and by rumour – that a number of fairly apolitical, not very 'Jewish' Jews began to take notice. Young people were particularly impressed. And the climax came with the abortive attempt to steal a plane, the notorious 'Leningrad trials' which followed, and the death sentences pronounced on Christmas Eve 1970. The death sentences – and the fact that when they were commuted it was at least partly in response to hostile world opinion – encouraged sympathisers abroad to organise.

That happened fast, and efficiently, and not only Jews became involved (Greville Janner is the only Jew on the parliamentary committee for the Release of Soviet Jewry). But it has, naturally and perhaps rightly, remained largely a Jewish campaign: for instance, forms asking people to help include such questions as 'May we get in touch with you on Shabbat?' The campaign does of course include people who are politically Arab (or Palestinian) sympathisers, whose names are there to prove their good credentials – i.e. that they are not anti-semitic as such. The campaigners think they can take this kind of help in their stride; indeed sometimes they positively welcome it, since it tends to be extra keen and efficient.

Jews in the Soviet Union are almost as distinctively marked out as if they were wearing yellow stars. Because the USSR is theoretically a federation of autonomous states, anyone born there has his 'race' marked on every document he ever needs – Ukrainian, Latvian, Georgian and so forth. A Jew is called a 'Jew' no matter where he is born, since there is no Soviet Jewish state to which he can claim allegiance.

It is a traditionally anti-semitic country; the reasons why the authorities are nevertheless reluctant to let Jews go are twofold. One, it 'looks bad'; which is true, when the Israelis use it as propaganda. But it 'looks' even worse when the campaigners publish the figures they have managed to get hold of – for instance, the simple fact that in the first quarter of 1973 7,600 exit visas were granted, and that by the first quarter of 1976 this had been reduced to 3,470. Also, the Israelis have been making considerably less propaganda about the Soviet Jews since they have run into their own well-known difficulties with the emigrés (how do you accommodate dozens of professors of Russian literature?) with the result that only half the number of Soviet Jews who apply to emigrate to Israel in fact end up there. The rest go West, mainly to the United States.

Secondly, the Russians are reluctant simply to lose so much talent – talent often nurtured, in the traditional way, precisely by the extra effort required for a Jew to succeed. So one of the most usual reasons for refusing a visa is that the Jew concerned possesses 'state secrets', particularly if he or she is a scientist. This is despite the fact that the refusenik may have applied to emigrate four or five years ago, at which point he or she would have been automatically dismissed and forced to look for

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humbler work; so that any secrets would be long out of date.

Because their experiences are so often comparable, Jews and dissidents find themselves related, but distinct. Of course it is possible to be both: it would even be quite natural for a Jew who had been refused a visa to go to Israel for family reasons to become a 'dissident' in a sense he had not been before. As far as the Soviet authorities are concerned the dissident problem is obviously weightier, since these are people who would prefer to stay in a changed Soviet Union, whereas many Jews just want out, as quietly as possible.

And quietly is the operative word. However distressed they may be by the kind of welcome Vladimir Bukovsky or indeed Solzhenitsyn may get in the West, the Russians are learning to make the most of their 'betrayals'. And, as the Bukovsky case has most recently shown, exiled Russians can be disgracefully exploited by Western politicians before they have been here long enough to learn the rules of the game. That is an issue which has to be re-thought with every new piece of *samizdat*, even with every grudging release of a man who has spent the best years of his life in jail. The Jews are different. You may renounce your politics; you may deny your God; you may betray your friends. But you can never – first, last or any of the time – change your race.

Jeremy Bugler

Power to the Power Stations?

Professor Robert Neild was last week arguing forcefully, in the public prints and on the ether, that Britain's bumble-stumble economy is in large measure the fruit of excessive defence spending governments have indulged in since the war. Germany and Japan, debarred from such investment, put their money into manufacturing; today they dominate world trade while Britain slumps, shaming itself and risking world peace by peddling arms to regimes such as Iran, South Korea and that ilk.

The Government is now on the edge of reaching an industrial decision that in ten to 20 years' time could turn out to have been cut from the same such template. Last week the cabinet energy committee considered and approved, broadly, a report one of whose recommendations is that the Central Electricity Generating Board should be made to order a steady series of power stations, even though consumers may very well have no need for their electricity. Some of these power stations would probably be nuclear. Just as the Government rescued Chrysler, whose cars were not needed, just as they manufacture arms which are not needed for any respectable purpose, so the Government wants to aid the heavy engineering companies whose turbine generators and boilers for power stations are not needed. The theme song seems to be all along, if it isn't needed, rescue it.

That's a little unfair. There are good and humane reasons why the Government wants and must do something about the turbine and boiler manufacturers; the danger is that the magnitude of the rescue programme could commit the country to a high-energy structure, which it might not need, and to a nuclear energy society, which it might regret. Often, as in the post-war arms spending decision, it is in infrastructure commitments like this that a nation's future is shaped.

The cabinet energy committee met to consider the report on the industry of the Central Policy Review Staff, the Think Tank whose pronouncements are beginning to echo one of those joke notices that garage proprietors and pub landlords pin up in their premises – Think Ahea, with no room left for the D. The Think Tank last month reported on the great shambles in the power station building industry. The industry's problems are in themselves an object lesson in building an economy rigidly on certain assumptions. These problems began with the energy crisis which unexpectedly caused electricity demand to drop. The CEGB suddenly found it had more than enough power stations on its hands, and so stopped ordering. It has given no orders to the basic suppliers for some years.

Sir Arthur Hawkins, outgoing Chairman of the CEGB, has argued that maintaining the profitability of private engineering companies is not listed in the CEGB's charter of responsibilities. Today the CEGB is awash with generating capacity and has said it will not need a new power station until 1980 or 1981. If it is the Government's view that the CEGB should be forced to order power stations in advance the Treasury should bear the extra cost. Power sales have been hit by cheap competing gas, a conspiracy of weathermen giving us a run of warm winters (until this year) and the need to save on imported oil. As it is, Britain relies more upon electric power than most other European nations.

Sir Arnold Weinstock's GEC has not been greatly discomfited; it has full order books until 1980. But boilermakers Babcock and Wilcox at Renfrew and turbine generator makers C. A. Parsons, on top of a Newcastle hill, are in very bad trouble. Babcock's 4,600 workers at Renfrew are desperate for work, and some men may be laid off anyway in the spring. Parsons has said categorically that unless it gets a domestic order soon (its last was in 1972) it will lay off 900 men at the end of February.

No one can underestimate the trauma if Parsons were to go under. In the North East, unemployment is already around 10 per cent. Three-quarters of the Parsons workforce live in the five miles around the Heaton works, precisely the area where 6,000 jobs in the shrinking shipbuilding industry are expected to go. A Neddy calculation has it that if the losses from Parsons and its dependent companies and the shipbuilding losses are totted up, then the total redundancies in this area could be between 21,000 and 27,000, producing a male redundancy rate of over 25 per cent. Human decency and political sensitivity would not and should not allow such a thing to happen.

What Parsons and Babcock want is an order for a second stage of Drax, the great Yorkshire power station. Drax 'B' makes some sense; it is near the new Selby coalfield and Parsons generators at Drax A have an excellent record. But the CEGB do not want it yet; they say that on the highest estimate of energy demand over the next ten or 20 years, the cost of Drax B would add 5 per cent to consumers' electricity bills; on a lower, not unrealistic estimate of how demand may grow, Drax B would add 25 to 40 per cent. That's a helluva cost for a power station.

Is this a price to be paid? The Think Tank and the cabinet committee believe so, but on the condition that industry 'rationalises'. This comes down to meaning a merger between the turbine generating divisions of GEC and Parsons. Neither company seems enthused with the notion; the unions may go along with it if there's a state stake in the new company, perhaps through the NEB, which seems reasonable enough.

But the hugely costly Drax B won't be worth the hike in electricity prices simply because its turbine generators are built by a rationalised company. The best aspect of the next Drax is its fuel: it will be coal-fired. Provided it is equipped with proper air pollution controls – the Norwegians are losing patience with us over the muck we send them across the North Sea – Drax B would provide a sensible and safe reserve of generating capacity for some decades. This is the more true when we remember that some Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor nuclear power stations will (finally) be starting to work.

Drax B could thus provide a valuable breathing space, allowing society time to consider whether it regards more and more energy consumption as part of the good life. Moreover, public concern over the last few months has at last embraced nuclear policy. The nuclear industry has quite suddenly found its leaks, risks and projects making the lead items on television news. Former nuclear workers who die of cancer are written up. Eminent men write to *The Times* expressing fears for their otherwise fortunate grandchildren. All this is very proper, and Tony Benn deserves great credit for fostering the debate.

It will, though, be worth next to nothing if the Government finally approves a steady 'forward ordering' programme of 2,000 megawatts a year, whether-you-need-it-or-not. Many power stations for this capacity would very probably be nuclear, and would thus frogmarch Britain a little further along the road of breeder reactors (to economise on uranium being used up by the new power stations) waste sites (to take the nuclear junk) and all the rest of Sir John

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Hill's projects. Proper, democratic debate about our nuclear future would be rendered worthless by an organisational decision, which, while making allowances for our new national game of get-the-civil-servant, is nevertheless a favourite Whitehall method of getting its own way.

The Think Tank's whether-you-need-it-or-not approach is founded on a view that a steady ordering of domestic power stations will provide a base for a new 'rationalised' company to sweep up export orders. Indeed, the companies admit that Drax B alone won't save them for long; they need an awful lot of export orders anyway. British manufacturing capacity is about 8,000 megawatts a year – way, way above the most the CEGB could ever order.

Nowhere in official thinking, though, is the heterodoxy of the alternative energy technologies apparent. A gross bias against these technologies is part of the credo of senior officials in the Departments of Energy and of Industry. Yet it may be that these technologies – novel methods of harnessing wave, wind and sun power – have a greater export potential than the prodigiously expensive nuclear power. Many energy analysts today doubt the commercial future of nuclear power, and if they are right, a solar panel works at Newcastle and a wave-power plant at Renfrew might (one day) offer more security to the local people. However, the Government is taking a different tack. It seems they are adjusting our future society to the needs of Sir Arnold Weinstock, Norman Parsons and Sir John Hill. If people in Britain should come to the view that they would prefer to live in a low energy, low risk society, in a landscape with no more clutter of power lines, cooling towers and high-security nuclear sites, then they will have their work cut out.

Hugh Thomas

The Demi-God That Failed

The career of Anthony Eden was a relative failure politically, but a personal triumph: a failure, because Eden's prime ministership was a dramatic disaster; but relatively so, since the prime ministerial catastrophe – 20 months (April 1955-January 1957) – cannot wash out the previous 32 years of intelligent and often successful diplomatic activity.

Eden's personal triumph was that he gained his office despite a petulant, vain and tempestuous private character. There was therefore always a contrast between Eden's public appearance as the perfect Christian gentleman, the dandy with the platitudes, and the strongly emotional character known by his colleagues, friends and the Foreign Office secretaries. Some of Eden's private comments on politics have latterly got into print (for instance: 'The only thing that's true to Ike in that letter is the signature and that's illegible') and they seem quite sharp and laconic, in contrast with his speeches, in which 'this country of ours', as he would put it, was made to seem the most tedious if virtuous nation in the world. 'However that may be' (another Edenism), Eden did conquer his temperament to a remarkable extent so that throughout most of his career he was the soul of moderation, the negotiator who would keep on trying, the man for whom appeasement could never really be an ugly word. True, he was helped by good looks and a certain natural grace, as well as by the fact that, in the Thirties, he fitted well as spokesman for all the survivors of the First World War who stood for the League and for decent conduct generally. On the other hand, the final débâcle of Suez cannot be understood without appreciating that the lifelong struggle for a moderate and reasonable course became finally too much for Eden who, suddenly tasting the pleasure of being applauded by the Right of the Conservative Party, found the role of bulldog impossible to resist. This change became evident in the spring of 1956, over the banishment of Archbishop Makarios.

This said, it is clear that there are other problems relating to the character of Eden.

Vicky's View of Eden in 1956

First, though Eden wrote three heavy volumes of public memoirs, in none of these did he give more than a few oblique references to his childhood. The only memorable such passage indeed is in *Full Circle*, where he recalls being stuck on some sandbank up the Thames when the news came of the Archduke's murder in 1914; even there, the interest is less the reference itself than the fact that in the book it fits into the place where a naïve reader would have expected to have heard of the beginnings of the famous secret alliance with Israel just before Suez.

This reticence is obviously suggestive since, as is obvious from his brother's memoir of their father, *Tribulations of a Baronet*, family life with Sir William and Lady Eden was more than a little odd. The lonely character there depicted of Eden's father, with his hatred of red flowers, his unrealised artistic promise, his years of grass widowerhood in the Cavendish Hotel, his atrocious temper, rivals Osbert Sitwell's study of his father; while the worldly mother, Lady Eden, was a beauty without much interest in her children except for Eden's eldest brother, killed in the First World War after a row – never made up – with his father. Eden's more recent elegant volume, *Another World*, recalling memories of an Edwardian childhood, does not tell much about the author's soul. It is, however, one of the most attractive pieces of writing by a retired Prime Minister.

The next period of Eden's life is more comprehensible. Through the First World War, an MC, into Parliament in 1923 and ascension to the prime ministership in 1955, was there more to it than actually appears in his books? Valentine Lawford, a one-time secretary at the Foreign Office, in a brilliant little memoir, *Bound for Diplomacy*, attests that Eden never relaxed; that on the longest weekend in the remotest island red boxes would always arrive, telephones would always ring. Was this, one wonders, some reflection of an inner doubt whether he was quite the man for the arduous tasks which he had so young in life assumed (Eden was 38 when he became Foreign Secretary for the first time) or was it a certain egotism that made it impossible for him to believe that things could go well unless he was in hour-to-hour command?

Eden's political career in the Thirties went well. He gained office first as Baldwin's protégé. As Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (1931-33), Lord Privy Seal (1934-35), Minister for League of Nations Affairs (1935) and Foreign Secretary (1935-38) he was directly associated with the collapse of the Versailles settlement, the failure to act against Hitler at an early and strategically appropriate stage. Travelling backwards and forwards to Geneva, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Mr Eden in his soft and comfortable hat, his dapper clothes and mustachioed good looks, seemed throughout Europe an appealing symbol of peace and reasonableness. Being fully preoccupied with foreign affairs, he managed to avoid having to soil his hands with the Depression at home. His memoirs for this period were entitled *Facing the Dictators*. A. J. P. Taylor has unkindly said that *Making Faces at the Dictators* would have been a better title. It is unkind since it is clear that no party would, if given power in Britain in the late Thirties, have done much better so far as foreign policy is concerned than Eden did.

Hitler was an unprecedented phenomenon, in new social and economic circumstances. Eden himself often later said that it had been over the Rhineland that the great opportunity had been missed of preventing Hitler without a major war. It is hard to believe. The German army would no doubt have withdrawn. But would the territory have been permanently occupied by Britain

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and France? If so, one could expect the passive resistance and social incoherence which accompanied the French occupation of the Ruhr in 1923. It is difficult to imagine Major Attlee and the Labour Party steeling Flandin and the French to take action.

The only effective chance of 'stopping Hitler' was in fact lost by non-intervention in the Spanish civil war. It is little comfort now to know that this view was shared by Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick in the Foreign Office (see his memoirs, *Inner Circle*). Here Eden played a cautious and moderately intelligent role, in the face of conflicting pressures. Blum, not Eden, was responsible for the idea of non-intervention; and it was Chamberlain's desire to begin a general series of diplomatic talks with Mussolini while Italian troops were still in Spain (in defiance of an agreement to withdraw them) that actually caused Eden's famous resignation, in February 1938. True, other things, such as Chamberlain's rejection of Roosevelt's offer of a conference and the fact that Chamberlain was doing a certain amount of diplomacy himself, counted a bit. But these seem to have been subsidiary aspects of the fact that Eden had by now decided that appeasement could not work and henceforth that there was nothing to be gained from negotiation with either Mussolini or Hitler.

It was at this point that Eden's relationship with Churchill began. Churchill himself, in *The Gathering Storm*, describes how he had always felt sympathetic towards this 'strong young figure', even when he had been advocating policies with which he himself disagreed. From the time of Chamberlain's accession to the prime ministership in May 1937, Eden and Churchill were in contact, and after his resignation Eden gravitated towards Churchill, without becoming an intimate. Perhaps Eden was aware of how easy it would be to fall completely under the influence of such a strong and still unpopular figure as Churchill.

Eden came back into the government, after the war had begun, somewhat discreetly, first as Dominions Secretary, then as Secretary of State for War, and it was only in late 1940, with Lord Halifax's move to Washington, that he re-entered the Foreign Office, with Churchill then Prime Minister. Through the rest of the five years of war, Eden, still in his forties, often proved a good foil to Churchill, appearing as the responsible man of moderation, sometimes wisely holding Churchill back, and working no doubt as hard as his chief. The volume of Eden's memoirs which deals with the war, *The Reckoning*, is far the best – as, indeed, it presents its author in the most favourable light. It is nevertheless curious that Churchill should in June 1942 have advised the King that, if he should die, Eden should be his successor. Surely Churchill could have seen that the very qualities making Eden so excellent a Foreign Secretary to a powerful Prime Minister were those which made him less appropriate for supreme leadership, in either war or peace? Recent revelations about Eden's part, and the Foreign Office's, in sending back to Russia so many emigré Russians at the end of the war seem also likely to receive strong condemnation from future biographers and historians of the period.

Eden remained Churchill's heir from 1942 till 1955. It does not seem that this was a specially trying position until the Fifties, when Churchill's increasing ill-health and the rising stars of Butler and Macmillan began to threaten his place at home – as first Acheson and then, worse, Dulles rivalled him abroad as the most formidable advocate of the West. Also, in 1953 Eden himself had a serious liver illness, with three operations, the first a failure. It is true that some of his most brilliant successes as Foreign Secretary followed this period, particularly his withdrawal from Egypt, his work at Geneva in 1954, and the achievement of WEU after the French refusal to accept the European Defence Community. Still, from that time on, being now 56, his health became a serious liability. His impatience to succeed Churchill was noticeable. Then began his fatal time as Prime Minister: the successful election, the abortive summit conference, the press attacks, the dismissal of Glubb and the determination to crush Nasser, a design undertaken *before*, if Sir Anthony Nutting was right (*No End of a Lesson*), the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company seemed to offer him the opportunity to do so.

There are still some obscure aspects of the Suez affair. Can Eden's health be blamed, did the strain of extraordinary decisions affect Eden's health? What really were the parts played by Harold Macmillan and by Eden's new wife? In the curious business of the secret alliance with Israel, did Eden act constitutionally or unconstitutionally and was there perhaps an element of self-deception as well as deception of the public in his denial that such alliance had ever occurred? Now that Eden is dead, some of the other surviving actors in this now half forgotten drama should at last feel free to write some account of their experiences.

Such memoirs will surely confirm that Eden, though a man of style, persistence, courage and patriotism, was too temperamental for supreme power; that there was a certain vein of superficiality about his nature which prevented him from seeing the historical roots of things, so allowing him to confuse Nasser with Hitler. Two other points may also be made: one that Eden's over-valuation of Britain's power in the Fifties caused him to neglect the opportunities for us in Europe at that time; two, that Eden was unable to carry through in Suez what was in effect a challenge to civil service orthodoxy almost as much as one to Nasser.

Eden's years since 1956 were evidently happy and relaxed, his time spent with memoirs, his herds of cattle, and an occasional intervention in public life such as his book on a Vietnam settlement in 1966 and a famous speech in the House of Lords on the Middle East crisis in 1967. No one will grudge him an evidently serene and harmonious retirement. But most people, including many Conservatives, will regret that he never saw fit to admit the truth about events in 1956 and indeed remained faithful to the end to the misleading account that he gave of those matters in *Full Circle*.

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Donald Gould

Human Spare Parts

Is the London bank official who has offered to sell one of his kidneys to an Arab for £8,000 likely to have started a vast new area of commerce? Shall we see an organ exchange and mart set up in all the world's capital cities? Will the classified ad. pages of the national press henceforward carry sections headed Hearts, Livers, Gonads, Lights, and so on? Shocked representatives of the medical Establishment have already poured scorn on the idea, claiming that the surgeons who would have to undertake the conveyancing in carnal property deals would never lend their skills to such a traffic. But the past record of the profession suggests that, given a large enough commission, there would be no lack of doctors ready to perform the necessary plumbing.

But if the sale of spare parts does catch on, the market is unlikely to provide more than a temporary bonanza for the agents and technicians involved, because before too long, according to Professor Thomas Stonier, an American working at Bradford University's School of Science and Society, it should become possible to induce people who have lost a limb to grow another, and it should become possible to grow hearts and livers and other bits and pieces of the human body in the laboratory.

The professor's views gained considerable publicity last week following the broadcast of a taped interview which he had given last November to a keen young lady reporter from the BBC's local radio station. Then, in the professor's words, 'All Hell broke loose'. He was not revealing some hitherto unannounced breakthrough in the field of biological research. He was simply discussing with the young lady some of the implications for medical science and medical practice of work in progress at Bradford, and his predictions were based upon discoveries which have been made there, and in many other laboratories, over the course of the past several decades.

All living organisms, plants and animals alike, start life as a single, fertilised cell. The chromosomes in this cell, like a computer tape, contain the complete set of instructions necessary for the development of that cell into, first, a grape-like cluster of identical daughter cells, and then the further development of this undifferentiated mass into limbs, skin, leaves, tusks, roots, blood, or whatever array and pattern of parts go to form the complete animal or plant involved. Every one of the countless millions of cells in a multicellular organism like a fish or a carrot or a horse contains the full genetic code – the complete set of instructions – present in the original, fertilised egg or germ cell. To this extent any single cell from an adult animal is potentially capable of developing into a complete new individual. Indeed, the trick has already been worked. It is possible to take a frog's egg, and to remove the nucleus, and to replace it with the nucleus of a cell taken from the lining of another frog's gut. When this is done the egg so treated turns into a tadpole, and then into an adult frog, which is the identical twin of the frog from whose gut the substitute nucleus was obtained. Indeed, if you treat 100 frog's eggs in this fashion, using the nuclei from 100 gut cells, you can produce 100 carbon copies of the frog from whose gut those nuclei came.

For many years biologists have worked away at trying to determine the nature of the influences which switch the appropriate set of instructions, from among the hundreds of thousands encoded in each cell, on and off, so that the cell either divides or stops dividing, and turns into a skin cell, or a liver cell, or otherwise pursues its final destiny. A great deal is already known.

Hormones play an essential role in this business of cell differentiation and organ formation. The rooting hormone, beloved of gardeners, is an example of a chemical which can persuade the cells at the cut surface of a plant stem to turn into a different type of cell, and to grow into the form of a root. Human kidney cells, cultured in the laboratory, will, under the right circumstances, begin to form tubules and other parts of the complete organ.

It has long been known that a salamander which loses a limb will grow another, but a frog won't. In the 1950s a Swiss scientist called Schotté had the idea that the failure of the frog's limb to regenerate was due to the fact that the tough skin which rapidly covers the amputation wound prevented further growth. To test this theory he

chopped the leg off a frog and rubbed salt into the wound to delay healing. To his delight the unfortunate animal did then grow a new leg, just like a salamander. But being a good scientist he then carried out a control experiment. He cut two legs off a frog, and rubbed salt into one wound, but not the other. Both legs grew again, the limb which grew from the unsalted wound being nearly as perfect as the limb which sprouted from the salted side. This showed that the stimulus to new limb growth must have been some substance – a hormone – circulating generally through the frog's body, the production of which had been stimulated by the salt experiment. The hormone concerned is a corticosteroid. If the normally non-regenerating cells of a frog's leg can be made to change their behaviour in this fashion, then there is no theoretical reason why the same magic should not work on a mutilated human.

A group of locally acting hormones known as chalones have recently attracted attention. These are substances produced by all cells which inhibit the growth of the particular type of cells by which they are produced. Thus there are liver cell chalones, and skin cell chalones, and so on. When the liver is the 'right' size, the quantity of liver chalone produced, and its concentration in the circulating blood, is at a level which prevents further growth. But if half a liver is removed, the concentration of circulating liver chalone falls, and the remaining liver cells begin to multiply, and go on multiplying until the liver once more attains its proper bulk. Then the chalone level is restored to normal, and growth ceases.

This kind of knowledge, says Professor Stonier, will eventually enable us to control cell growth and differentiation and organ formation precisely. We already know how to make cells multiply in a dish. The professor believes that within 15 to 50 years we shall know how to make them form themselves into complete parts.

Perhaps every newborn infant will have a sample of undifferentiated foetal-type cells (obtained from the placenta) put into cold storage, so that decades later, when the ageing body needs a new part, a pinch of the stored cells can be taken and grown into the component required. And since the newly cultured organ will be formed from cells native to the body into which it is to be grafted, the question of rejection will not arise.

It appears that some pundit of the Medical Research Council has reacted coolly to last week's publicity, saying that there is no evidence to justify such fancies. But Professor Stonier is sure that those who think thus are purblind. He points out that the doubling time for new knowledge reported in the biomedical literature is now seven years. This means that from 1970-77 we gained as much new information about living processes as had been accumulated between the time of Hippocrates and the beginning of this decade. At that rate we can expect a 32-fold increase in our understanding of life by the turn of the century. We only need the money and the will in order to achieve for man the chance of something approaching immortality.

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There's one snag. Even if we can grow a brain in a test-tube, it's pretty unlikely that we shall ever be able to fit a new brain into a body and connect it up by way of several million nerve fibres to eyes, ears, limbs, voice-box, and the rest of the machinery. So we may find ourselves employing a costly and awesome technology in order to sustain active life in a rapidly growing host of citizens suffering from senile dementia.

This being so we might do well to accept the fitness of the pattern whereby one generation makes way for the next in due season. Death is, after all, a good and essential part of living.

Peter Wilby

The School Language Frontier

Since education is largely about the ability to communicate, foreign languages ought to be a central part of the curriculum. If you can add French to English, you are likely to find someone within earshot who can understand you in most parts of the globe. If you can add Spanish or German, the likelihood becomes a near certainty.

Modern languages, however, are rightly identified as a problem area in the Department of Education and Science's 'agenda for discussion'. French is in steady decline, Russian is in very steep decline and only German is improving slightly. More than half our children drop languages before the end of secondary school. Total O level entries have increased enormously in the past decade, but entries for modern language exams hardly at all. At A level, the numbers taking foreign languages are even declining. French entries were down by 5.4 per cent between 1970 and 1974, Russian by 19.6 per cent. It may sound fantastic, but some teachers seriously believe that foreign languages might disappear from state secondary schools by the end of the century.

What has gone wrong? In the 1960s there was great optimism. The growth of foreign holidays, it was thought, would increase enthusiasm for language learning; modern languages, traditionally elite subjects largely confined to the grammar schools, were being democratised in the new comprehensives, one-third of the nation's primary schools were taking part in a scheme to teach French to eight-year-olds. One head, utterly carried away, wrote of 'a confluence of glittering streams'.

Alas, each stream in turned proved to be a mirage. First, when the modern family got to its package holiday hotel, it encountered English-speaking waiters serving fish and chips. There was no need, it discovered, to speak an unfamiliar language, even in the mysterious abroad. Travel did not broaden the mind, it narrowed it.

Second, the language laboratories produced more buzzing headaches than instant linguists. According to a study by the Language Teaching Centre at York University, schools spread their use too thinly, with each class getting just one 40-minute period a week in the lab. Most of the commercial tapes that the schools used relied on stimulus responses. Pupils learned the responses efficiently but remained unclear about what they meant and were still unable to use the language in any real-life context.

Third, modern language teachers (of whom there were few enough, anyway) were not trained to teach the former secondary modern pupils. Syllabuses, textbooks and teaching methods were still aimed at the top 20 or 30 per cent. Many schools, therefore, abandoned language teaching for less able pupils in favour of 'European studies', an abstraction that only the English could invent. Too many of these courses involve learning lists of French cheeses and German poets, instead of lists of irregular verbs. Taught by skilled linguists to bored and fractious adolescents, they become a criminal waste of time and manpower.

Fourth, a study by the National Foundation for Educational Research suggested that there had been few long-term gains from pupils starting French at eight. The report's publication, two years ago, led to newspaper headlines of the 'Parlez-vous at Eight a Waste of Time' variety. But the report's conclusions were weaker than the headlines; the evidence in the report was weaker than the conclusions; and even the evidence itself was open to dispute. The trouble was that it suited some people very well to have primary French branded as a failure. Schools which had leapt on the bandwagon in the early 1960s were anxious to get off when they discovered the difficulties. And local authorities and the DES were happy to be presented with an excuse for cutting out an expensive curriculum development.

So where do we go from here? It is no use saying that languages can be learnt after school in crash courses because the experts say that most people don't benefit from them unless they have already picked up another language more painfully and slowly. It is up to the schools to release children from the straitjacket of monolingualism. The chief requirement – and I know it sounds obvious – is for more time. In the overcrowded curriculum of the modern secondary school, the periods devoted to language are being whittled down. A core curriculum, with minimum standards, could help to reverse that alarming trend.

But the content and objectives of language courses need a new look, too. One language teacher and examiner recently remarked that 'an O level in a foreign language is a certificate of near incompetence, and a CSE is a certificate of real incompetence'. That is because there is still too much emphasis on written work and accurate translation. Another study by York's language centre showed that people working in industry and commerce needed to speak, read and listen in foreign languages, more than they needed to write in them. They needed to talk to Continental businessmen on the telephone, to understand events at international conferences, to digest documents and articles. Most of us, in our leisure time, require similar skills to enable us to find our way round France or to appreciate films. But 100-per-cent accuracy isn't essential, as long as we can catch the gist of what is said or written.

The further advantage of changing the emphasis of language courses is that the less able pupils have fewer difficulties with reading and listening than with writing and speaking. Michael Buckby, at York's language centre, believes that the great majority of pupils could benefit from 'practical' language courses. Along with local teachers in North Yorkshire, he is developing such courses and tests to go with them. The tests could be taken at any age, and simply passed or failed (and retaken after weak points had been brushed up) like a driving or a swimming test. A basic test, he suggests, could cover French 'survival skills' – the words and phrases you are bound to need if you are travelling, booking hotel rooms, buying goods, ordering restaurant meals in France. A more advanced test could require the ability to read general news articles in a French daily paper.

There are other solutions to the language teaching crisis, but this is one in which the DES is taking particular interest. The 'survival kit' might one day be part of a common core curriculum. Even if it isn't the right solution, we still need something fairly radical. At a recent conference, the West German Ambassador had a telling answer to those who observed that, if you went into a Munich shop, all the assistants spoke English. 'The Germans', he said, 'may sell in English, but they will not buy in English.'

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London Diary

☐ 'Gilmore's Dying Joke'; 'Gilmore Gets his Wish'; 'The Killing of Gary Gilmore'. Front-page headlines in British papers about a run-of-the-mill crook from Utah. It has long been an argument put by the anti-capital punishment lobby that, if there are to be executions, they should be held in public. This, the argument goes, would prove so horrifying that public opinion would automatically swing against the death penalty. It has always seemed to me a specious and foolish idea: after all, some of our own grandfathers may well have gone to watch at Tyburn Hill. And what – except for the film for which the detestable Mr Larry Schiller has paid some £75,000 – could be much more public than Gilmore before the firing squad? I hope I am wrong to feel as pessimistic as I do about the eventual effects of Gilmore's prolonged and gruesomely compelling death.

☐ The idea of Theodore Sorensen being the first liberal martyr of the Carter Administration is not one that easily convinces me. I once spent a weekend campaigning with him at a time when he still had some aspirations to run for elective office. It was a weird, almost eerie, experience: listening to those sequences of pointed contrasts and balanced clauses I was never quite sure whether I was hearing the ventriloquist or the doll. He certainly saw himself not just as the keeper of the Kennedy muniments but also as the custodian of the Camelot shrine – one speech, I recall, began with 'Today would have been *his* birthday'. But among Robert Kennedy's staff he was always a suspect figure, rightly regarded as the merchant of a cautious, conventional wisdom. Nor did he ever achieve much emotional *rapport* with liberals – it was, I think, Murray Kempton who once wrote of him 'that wintry face and those thin lips will always remind us that the pioneer women of Nebraska pulled the plough and chopped the wood while their husbands complained all the while about the service'. It was, it seemed to me, a particularly apt description as ten years ago I watched him slide into a Senate committee room as the chosen champion of General Motors against Ralph Nader; the occasion for that particular hearing was General Motors' action in having hired a private detective to spy on Nader's private life. Maybe the CIA's victory is our deliverance, too.

☐ Granada's 21st anniversary *What the Papers Say* lunch this week was (as always) an agreeable occasion – but those who had hoped that Mrs Thatcher would use it for a headline hitting speech on Fleet Street and the unions left with rather a feeling of let-down. Apart from some fairly airy generalities – and the now routine references to Solzhenitsyn and Bukovsky (to whom Paul Johnson was added for good measure) – the Iron Lady kept herself fairly sternly under control. I'm sure she was wise to do so, for the issues about the rights (or rather non-rights) of printers that seem so clear-cut to David Astor have always appeared to me rather more complex. So far as I understand it, Mr Astor's doctrine, and presumably that of his old mates on the Newspaper Publishers' Association, is that printers exist to be helots or serfs: if someone requires them to put in type an article accusing them of outrageous behaviour or even criminal conduct, then it is their duty simply to get on with it. Anything else is 'censorship'. But even the worst bad baron of a newspaper proprietor always boasted that he never compelled a *journalist* to write something he did not believe in. Why, then, should a printer be expected automatically to set in type something he not only finds repugnant but knows to be untrue? It's about time someone broke the news in Fleet Street about what industrial democracy really means. I fear, when it eventually sinks in, it is going to be an awful shock.

☐ A sad little notice appeared last week among 'Latest Appointments' on the court page of *The Times*. Mr John Tomlinson, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, would – a six-line announcement ran – also henceforth be Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Overseas Development. As a news item it could equally well have been moved a few inches across and appeared in the obit. column – for what in fact it commemorated was the final laying to rest of one of the few genuine innovations (as opposed to mere gimmicks) Harold Wilson introduced into government a dozen years ago. In 1964 the new Ministry of Overseas Development – presided over by Barbara Castle as minister and Andrew Cohen as permanent secretary (together nicknamed the Elephant and Castle) – was one of the really humming government departments: active, energetic and assertive it triumphantly fought off successive challenges to its economic survival under the various rounds of the Wilson cuts. But the Foreign Office never at all cared for the idea of its being an independent entity – and, after a long war of attrition, it has now finally had its way. First the ODM lost its *de jure* seat in the cabinet, then its political head was demoted from being a minister of cabinet rank to being a mere minister of state and now, as the crowning indignity, he has been deprived even of having an under-secretary of his own. It is, as I say, a sad story – but also an illuminating one of the way in which politicians end up as being mere putty in the hands of the mandarins.

☐ The politics of Neville Sandelson's Hayes and Harlington Labour Party grow ever more messy as the fourth and final round of his fight to stay MP nears. After six months of intrigue in the largely uncharted territory of the Labour Party rule-book, the balance could hardly be finer. There will be 48 votes at Sunday's decisive GMC: Sandelson's critics claim 22 sewn up with 2 waverers; if Sandelson loses this pair, the chairman's casting vote will put him out. Tense as these figures are for Sandelson, it is a marked improvement on his previous showings and reflects hard campaigning in Fleet Street, the Commons and his constituency. To win over *The Times* correspondent was perhaps a foreseeable scalp. But the coveted trophy of Foot and Kinnock appearing on the Hayes platform with him before Sunday has eluded him. Their thinking may have been – since neither wants a by-election, especially one over which hangs the threat of an ousted Sandelson standing as a self-justifying Tavernite – that if Sandelson does fall on Sunday their prior agreement to speak will act as a useful lever to deter him from standing and thereby handing a crucial seat to the Tories. There is also great altercation in the constituency over a social meeting between Sandelson, USDAW officials and two T&G delegates to the special GMC. According to two different sources, the gathering decided that one of the T&G delegates should vet the vote of the sole USDAW delegate to ensure that he complied with a branch mandate to support Sandelson. But according to the local Labour Party ruling the delegates must be given a free vote on Sunday. Aware of this, on 14 January USDAW dropped their original delegate, Malcolm Evans altogether. But, according to Transport House, once membership is frozen as it was in the constituency in October no delegate can be taken on or off. The story is sure to be more involved by Sunday but one delegate's vote will certainly matter then and one MP's vote certainly matters to the Government.

☐ I've always secretly believed that NS readers are coffee-addicts – not that we've ever asked about it in readership surveys, though perhaps we should. But I've also always supposed that Nescafé addicts would do anything rather than give it up. It seems I was wrong. At a fairly grand delicatessen near my home – which has a kind of right to over-charge since it combines the atmosphere of an old-fashioned grocer with a pleasing modern tendency to stay open to all hours – I was told that they were now stocking another brand (no, not the one that springs to mind) because their fur-coated customers would no longer pay £3.40 a pound for their pleasure. Perhaps we should all begin to get used to tea again, ever solace in times of crisis. Or even milk.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Mr Richard Du Cann QC, defending Beatty, said: 'Cheeseman was a larger than life character who seemed to have everything the successful businessman could want. He owned a light aircraft, Jensen and Lamborghini cars and a houseful of expensive paintings, sculpture and shotguns.' – *Guardian* (Richard Clarke)

☐ 4.10 *The Waltons*: The Loss. A problem is resolved when the cat dies giving birth to kittens. – *Daily Mirror* (Geoffrey Messenger)

☐ Phyllis is also a Sunday school teacher, but she says that is purely non-political. And she is full of admiration for Prime Minister Jim Callaghan, so much so that she named her budgie after him. – *Isle of Wight Weekly Post* (S. A. Urry)

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University Forum

Simon Berlyn

Kent's Stunted Growth

Few architects tread the pilgrim's way to visit the Canterbury site of the University of Kent. It is only the students who live in such desolate surroundings that suffer any martyr complex. The initial difficulty was that the university wanted from the start the wholesale grandeur of experience achieved at Oxbridge over centuries. High table was housed in functional college buildings and the authorities, imbued with a Victorian sense of paternalism, imposed petty restrictions on individual movement. Though they obviously planned that their dominant ideal, the collegiate system, should provide more than a correspondence course, they blinded themselves to the fact that neither their architectural plans nor capital could match the demanded pace of the university's expansion. The spirit of Oxbridge was never evoked at Kent. The formal restrictions were rapidly thrown out while high table alone survives in muted form. But paternalism removed, no fresh impetus has replaced it. The original collegiate blue-print can neither be completed nor reversed.

The drastic shortcomings of university life at Kent are built on this fact. The campus sprang into its hill-top half-life in 1965 though the planning, constrained by the capital limits set by the University Grants Committee, had started only two years earlier. Kent was also hit by particular local problems such as the absence of a temporary site (to allow campus development to proceed more slowly and carefully) and the obscurantism of the planning authorities, sensitive flowers, who feared that temporary on-site huts might prove fixed features. So long-term plans were sacrificed in the interest of getting instant results and avoiding temporary eye-sores.

The planners neither accepted that 'small is beautiful', nor raised a palace of culture and learning. The consulting architect, Lord Holford, worked amid uncertainty. Although a modern national institution was required, the local sponsors who ultimately set the brief were possessed by a vision of Oxbridge in the Garden of England. Was Holford's plan a good one? He knew immediate funds to be limited and even though the spirited decision to develop the campus rapidly was well intended, in professional terms it was more like an example of blind optimism. He prepared the whole campus outline, on which – to the plan of a Greek Cross with a single entrance – he built Eliot College, a dull, low mass giving the feeling of 'self-contained uncommunicativeness'. With its study bedrooms reaching from eternally lit labyrinthine corridors, Eliot set a precedent. A year later, 1966, its duplicate, Rutherford appeared. The Vice-Chancellor, Dr Geoffrey Templeman praised those responsible for the first college – which focuses on Canterbury Cathedral. But *Architectural Review* criticised this as 'an insufficient planning determinant'.

But this is a mild rebuke in comparison with what Kent deserves for the way it coped with its growing capital shortage. Of Rutherford the Vice-Chancellor admitted 'we could only allow 18 months for a contract which exceeded £800,000'. But if the pace of construction proved too rapid for comfort, it was still too slow to keep up with the expansion of numbers. Original targets were for 3,000 students at the end of the first decade while Lord Holford, perhaps too grandiloquently, had once envisaged 6,000 on the site. College student numbers had been set at 600, half of them resident, so on this ratio five colleges at least were required. But in October 1967 (the third college, Keynes, unbuilt) 1,600 students stampeded the facilities of the earlier residences, causing 'a great strain'. Overcrowding was planned.

If the prospects looked bleak, then the expectations remained fanciful. Keynes was not due to open until August 1968; plans for the fourth college were just being drawn up. But even while the university, in the 1967 period of cuts, was feeling qualms about the size of the next University Grants Committee quinquennial award, the Vice-Chancellor announced that plans for the fifth college were 'within the limits of the present capital programme'. A start on that college may be made soon.

While Kent grew in scope through 1966-7 with the opening of the library and chemistry teaching labs, campus accommodation and facilities declined, relative to students. The building grant for 1968 was only £638,000 and despite the new recurrent grant being linked closely to UGC prescribed student numbers Dr Templeman nevertheless felt that 'it is still open to us to exceed this number . . . by spreading the Treasury grant more thinly'. Accordingly, Kent increased its proportion of graduate students, who absorb most funds, to 10 per cent, 8 per cent above the UGC's stipulation.

Urban sociologists might argue that Holford's designs provided the student unrest of 1968 with an added dimension, yet paradoxically the best college, Keynes, opened that year. Under the second consulting architect, Mr Henderson, the college created square residential blocks round the refectory, used softer materials and even incorporated landscaping. But any progress Keynes accomplished, the fourth college, Darwin, failed to consolidate. It has been glibly described as a 'starkly simple functional plan, bi-symmetrical in the shape of a Y'. The exact function appears to be to create a feeling of being screened. *Architectural Review* described the campus as having 'neither a visible intellectual ordering at work nor a sense of logical accretion over time'.

Conscious of design economies, Vice-Chancellor Dr Templeman aired a panglossian view. The campus had not after all been built to a 'fixed scheme', its development had been 'of a more organic kind'. And in 1975, with an abrupt change of metaphor, he criticised the public view of universities as 'student factories' 'best judged by their cost effectiveness'. But Dr Templeman spoke knowing that Kent were making cut-backs of £300,000, the amount by which its income fell short of expenditure levels in real terms. How else did the university respond? With its own curious brand of double-think. In 1970, realising residential expansion had ground to a halt, Dr Templeman had argued that 'the university would work as an effective and coherent whole'. But in October 1975 he ploughed on with further expansion. Though conscious of the jeopardy in which he was placing academic standards he announced student numbers would rise from 2,600 to 3,000 'to enable the university to work with full effectiveness'.

The lesson of 1967 ignored, full effectiveness has been wrought at the cost of semi-permanent residential overcrowding. The deterioration of living standards, let alone academic ones, is unquestionable. Like the Marx Brothers tearing up the carriages to fuel the engine, Kent has expanded its capacity by spreading the resources ever thinner simply to keep the collegiate system going. The oft-quoted phrase that each college would be the university in microcosm always begged the question what the university intended itself to be. Today theatre and films may flourish on campus, but there is no building where all can gather to eat, debate, drink or entertain themselves. Students disperse to Herne Bay at dusk and London at weekends.

The early removal of paternalism from campus life and the later economic need to centralise college planning created a vacuum filled by a new form of administrative conservatism which now pervades all aspects of academic life. Where else do they produce four-page directives, detailing five categories of meal subscription, plus exemption clauses? Michael Beloff's fear in 1968 that 'the colleges could so easily develop into merely functional halls of residence . . .' has materialised with a vengeance. Kent's campus has the perfect joylessness of the administrative ideal.

Some students argue that time is a great healer and that an improvement will come with age. But it is not from growing pains that Kent suffers – rather from *rigor mortis* before its tenth birthday. It is old before its time. The new universities were supposed to make academics look outwards and the undergraduates inwards yet at Kent most academics desert the place they call 'toy town', leaving students to inevitably barren introspection. The nagging fear expressed at the time of the Robbins Report in 1963 that in university terms 'more means worse' is not necessarily fuelled by the pretensions and might of Kent, since poorly planned, starved of stimulus and funds, Kent has never become a university.

* *Simon Berlyn, a politics graduate of Leicester University, spent a year at the University of Kent.*

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Always Wave to Trains

There are, when you come to think of it, very few people in life whom you kiss lovingly on the forehead. Enterprising wanderers down love's by-ways may well stumble upon more exotic areas to salute (is it the Burmese who take such a lively interest in the backs of friends' knees?) but the forehead is a sort of chaste and hallowed zone reserved for true love and respectability and it was here that, in my youth, my mother would kiss me on those days when she was especially pleased with me. The occasions were, understandably, rather rare. I was an ill-behaved and deeply unattractive child, dreaded in every nursery in SW13 and from a very early age I bore a close facial resemblance to my paternal grandmother who, in her turn, was the living image of Queen Victoria when widowed and in huffy mood. Family snaps reveal me either frowning displeasingly or scowling or pouting or ragefully blubbing, a repellent spectacle, dreadfully obese and with several double-chins which in second childhood have returned richly to me, bringing a few friends with them.

We were a firmly middle of the middle-class family and in those days such families always had nannies for their children. My nanny was kind enough not to consider me nearly as poisonous and uncuddlesome as I now clearly realise I was. She was calm and patient and unfailingly obliging. I used to find railways, either model or real, totally fascinating and she allowed me, with my arms and hands stretched out before me, to pretend to be a railway engine and, loudly puffing, to run full tilt into the cosy and shock-absorbing 'buffers' on her chest. Invited on Sunday to join my parents for dessert after lunch, a frequent treat, I made mention of our railway game and of nanny's buffers, greatly confusing my father, never the quickest chap to absorb a new concept, who plainly had visions of a series of old gentlemen whom nanny had managed to enslave. As I grew older, our afternoon walks on Barnes Common often led us to the railway line that runs, I think, east to Clapham Junction and Waterloo and westwards to Mortlake and Richmond and goodness knows what further excitements beyond. There we would stand and wait for a train to pass. Nanny's view was that everybody, and children particularly, should always wave to trains ('You never know, somebody nice might see you and wave back'). This was better, outward-looking advice for a child than she perhaps realised and I have been wildly waving, in a different sense, ever since. There have been, I must confess, one or two somewhat bizarre responses but on the whole the readiness to wave and risk a snub has brought, in terms of friendship and interest, an enormous gain. Better than at Barnes, indeed, where the trains seemed to be only electric ones and were, in the afternoons, relatively empty. Not good waving material. Wavings back were few and far between but one or two a week just about kept us going and on the alert for more.

This early training has caused me to be all in favour of the reading of horoscopes by those lucky enough to take newspapers and magazines which feature them. Horoscopes too are outward-looking and encourage people to be expectant and on the *qui vive* for novelties, either human or material. It helps the day along to wonder about that 'letter from abroad', the new friendship to be made at work (Mr Bagshaw, from head office, graciously unbending and suggesting lunch at Spotti's and to hell with your vouchers), the elderly relative who is going to 'turn up trumps' (presumably by turning up his toes and leaving you everything). Optimism is the general tone and only very occasionally do they strike a discouraging note ('The afternoon is not a good time for gardening') or deal in relative gloom ('Somebody on whose judgment you rely will unexpectedly leave the country', *not* under a cloud, one does hope). Ladies' magazines are splendid providers of horoscopic material and some of them even go further and, studying your stars with immense concentration, add helpful tips ('Play up your eyes and your classic bone structure') for emphasising your sex appeal ('Aim for the still-waters-run-deep look').

I have recently been reading a number of horoscopes and in particular the sections devoted to my very own astral sphere (Taurus, of all the unsuitable animals) and, my word, 1977 is going to be an interesting year down in Devon! I discount, of course, the vague statements that crop up, such as 'On Tuesday, anything could happen'. Of course it could, unless I'm careful. Then there is 'a possibility of good news from afar'. How far is afar in the world of astral divination? Do they mean Mars or merely Newton Abbot? Imprecision gets us nowhere. And what can one make of 'later in the month your affairs will get a boost'? What affairs? Financial or *du coeur*? It's far too late for either to be any sort of real help. Certain prognostications, however, are quite clear and do indeed apply to my happy country existence. 'An older relation could surprise you' it says.

At my age I am a bit short of older relations so this can only be my Cousin Madge, now nudging 86. She may well surprise me but not, I do trust, by taking to her horse and trap again (her last trip to Exeter and back, some years ago, took her 11 hours and she was far from welcome in the Cathedral car park, the attendant insisting that the facility was only intended for horseless carriages. The horse was called Ajax and it had a morbid passion for geraniums). Then comes a brightness – 'A sociable evening will find friends in sparkling mood'. Hooray! This obviously means the Bultitudes, and in top form, splashing out on a dinner party to celebrate the latest Gallup Poll figures (Mrs Thatcher up a point or two), with the Colonel regaling us with sporting yarns from his lifelong battle against fur and feather, and Mrs Bultitude a vision in a flattering multi-print silk sarong top-piece and flared harem trousers (Miss Entwhistle's disapproving sniffs can be heard in Exeter). But now, a riddle: 'A splendid day for buying home equipment' is hotly followed by 'Control your wanderlust'. There's a teaser, with instructions for action coupled with a plea for inaction. One wants so much to do the right thing. If I go to Torquay (nine miles) and buy a washing-machine, will that rate as wanderlust and will due retribution come later ('On Thursday, something unpleasant will stop you in your tracks' is planned for Aquarians but could well be diverted my way)? Better not to chance it.

The *TV Times*, chock-a-block with good things almost all connected with TV, has, surprisingly, its own horoscope section, 'Zodiac and You', together with further helpful information under the heading 'Stay Healthy With the Heavens'. Turning eagerly to my own health section, I find 'Taureans are the heavyweights of the zodiac. They put on extra flesh around the neck and thighs in particular.' No need to be insulting, and my thighs are my own affair, but perhaps there's something in this star business after all.

Roger Woddis

Shortfellow

President Carter has asked James Dickey, his favourite poet, to read some of his verse during the inauguration celebrations.

'Honour be to Jimi-Khata!'
Cried the warriors of Congress,
Cried the senators and salesmen,
Cried the holy priests of popcorn,
When he came in triumph smiling,
With his teeth of brightest porcelain,
From the regions of the South-Wind,
From the burning plains of Georgia,
From the sacred pods that grew there,
Arachis, the mighty peanut.
So it was that Jimi-Khata,
Valiant victor of November,
Came to hear the songs of Diki,
Poet nurtured in Atlanta,
Poet with the look of Brando,
Once a simple copywriter
Advertising Koka-Kola,
Now a widely-selling author,
University professor,
Novelist whose book and movie
Told of underfed hillbillies,
Told of homosexual sadists,
Yet the well-read Jimi-Khata
Reckoned him their finest poet.
Thus the Chief in all his glory
Came to his inauguration,
Came and went into his wigwam,
To his white and worshipped wigwam,
While his people hailed their hero,
Hailed the mighty Jimi-Khata.

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Letters to the Editor

One House

Sir, When I read John Griffith on 'the effrontery of the privileged . . .' (NS 14 January) I thought he must be talking about prime ministers who think that an unqualified 'no' is a decent reply to any question, or about MPs who have and use a whole machinery to protect their privileges and interests, or about trade union officials who stop the mails and otherwise threaten the citizenry. But no, it was the Lords.

Agreed, some Lords are none too bright, but there is one thing in their favour: those who turn up at Westminster regularly aren't there for the money. Some MPs are none too bright, and a lot of them *are* there for the money. It's a fair bet that the common man would be better off governed by the Lords, with the Commons as a check, than he is at present.

But John Griffith doesn't want any check at all. He wants a single House, in which a simple vote by lobby-fodder would be the last word in the regulation of all our lives. Inevitably he talks about 'democracy', but equally inevitably links this with 'socialism'. The whole point about a two-chamber system is that no minority opinion will prevail, on a snap vote, either because a 'pair' cheats, or because two or three MPs of the same party have died, or on account of some other irrelevant circumstance.

In fact the checks should be strengthened, because not all the citizens are socialists, and those who are mean different things by the word. They are not all conservatives either, while that word too has various meanings. So, if it's democracy you want, hang on like grim death to the second chamber. But if it's dictatorship by a minority, agree with John Griffith.

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The Case for the Breeder

Sir, Dr John Loraine's report on his metaphoric world tour ('The State of the Planet 1977', NS 7 January) makes depressing reading. His view of global politics in general is none of our business, except in so far as we are all world citizens; but when he talks about the nuclear industry we are very much concerned.

In one respect he is guilty of selective reporting. He says, rightly, that the referendum in California on the future of nuclear power in that state – Proposition 15 – 'resulted in a win for the nuclear establishment'. He goes on to say that 'referenda in other states of the Union were promised . . .' They were also held, with results similar to those in California. The proportion of voters expressing themselves as for the continued development of nuclear power in the six states in which this issue appeared on the ballot papers was roughly two to one.

There are, of course, other points in his article with which we disagree. For the sake of space, we will touch on just one. Dr Loraine says the sixth report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution 'constituted one of the most welcome contributions to the nuclear debate for many years'. While the Authority would not go quite so far as to agree wholeheartedly with this statement, we did and do welcome the generally clean bill of health that report gave to the industry in Britain. We said at the time of publication that we were also glad to see that the Royal Commission recognised that nuclear power would make a valuable, perhaps vital, contribution to future energy supplies and that it would be neither wise nor justified to abandon it. Similarly, we noted at the time that the Royal Commission recognised that 'if it is accepted that the country may need fast-breeder reactors in operation by the turn of the century, it is not too soon to start'.

The Authority believes the maintenance of the nuclear option in Britain, as recommended by the Commission, depends upon proceeding with fast reactor development at a measured pace – involving the construction of a full-scale, 1300 megawatt, 'Commercial' Fast Reactor to follow the smaller, 250 megawatt Prototype Fast Reactor at Dounreay and thus continuing 20 years previous experimental and development work.

'No longer can we be depicted as mere coruscating pamphleteers,' says Dr Loraine. Is it our turn? We welcome public debate, confident that we have a case for the further development and use of nuclear power in Britain. Might we hope that *we* will benefit from Dr Loraine's reminder, quoted from Russell's *Liberal Decalogue*, that 'every opinion now accepted was once eccentric'?

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Unions and Hospitals

Sir, I was shocked to read Donald Gould's attack on the health service trade unions and their attempts to protect their members' jobs ('Continental Breakfast in Bed?' NS 7 January). Cuts in public expenditure mean that choices have to be made. Many of the so-called 'savings' introduced in the NHS recently have involved cuts in services like hospital cleaning which not only reduce the number of jobs for domestic staff but also undermine patient care and staff morale. Meanwhile, doctors continue to exercise their 'clinical freedom' and to prescribe treatment without any regard for its cost-effectiveness.

Donald Gould decries the shift in power in the NHS to the trade unions but it is this change which enabled many groups of hospital workers, who were shamefully exploited, to increase their living standards and their status at work. At last, their vital contribution to patient care has been recognised. Much of the threat to the future of the NHS comes from the conservatism of doctors and their belief that only they know what is best for the patient and the NHS. Donald Gould should welcome additional sources of power within the NHS which can challenge this supremacy; successive governments have been unable to dent it even slightly.

The cynicism of Gould's anti-union attack reaches its height with his explanation of why the health service trade unions oppose private practice. The trade unions and the Labour Party oppose private practice because it diverts resources from those who need them to those who can pay for them, and for no other reason. The problems of the NHS, which are many, like the problems of the economy, cannot be cured by a dose of 'union-bashing'.

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Sir, Donald Gould's article 'Continental Breakfast in Bed?' (NS 7 January) is symptomatic of the paranoia which afflicts those members of the medical profession who are gripped by the delusion that the National Health Service is a limited liability company in which the majority shareholders are doctors. This leads them to believe that all other health workers are dangerous radicals whose unions are trying to unseat the BMA as managing director prior to nationalising the Health Service under democratic control.

BERNARD DIX
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Sir, Donald Gould's article included the statement 'Nalgo told its members working in Town Halls how to obstruct applications for planning permission for new private hospitals'.

This unfortunate impression, I suspect, persists because of the way in which the media muddled the true position when Nalgo advised its *branches* on how to lodge planning objections to new private hospitals. Branches were told that objections could be lodged on matters relating to planning law and environmental factors. There was never any question of Nalgo asking its members to obstruct work relating to applications for private hospitals (and such applications are publicly listed). What Nalgo did was to tell its branches what rights existed in law for lodging objections to plans for more private hospitals.

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Police Five

Sir, In their review of the recent corruption case concerning the Obscene Publications Squad (NS 7 January) Messrs Shirley and Short raise only two relatively peripheral implications of the case – and even then briefly. They are worried by the time the case took to come to court and at the end express a vague concern at what other 'dark secrets' may lie hidden in the Yard.

Yet the important point of the case is surely that in a very important sense it is *not* typical of the corruption now facing Scotland Yard. Shirley and Short dwell at length on the deliberate efforts of Detective Chief Inspector George Fenwick to line his pockets, to induce other policemen into his ways and on how he actually helped produce some of the pornographic magazines. In doing this, however, they curiously echo by implication the standard explanation of corruption. This is

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that Fenwick was a bad apple and that in every barrel of policemen there will always be one or two bad ones, men who appear to have been evil from the word go. There is never any attempt to explain why some people rather than others go bad, nor do Shirley & Short appear aware that this is the nub of the matter. Yet we know that over 400 policemen have been unloaded from the Yard alone in the last few years for corruption of one sort or another and that the anti-corruption squad (A10) has more than 300 cases on its books. These can't all be bad apples; some other explanation is needed.

When you look into it what you find is that when corruption isn't just silly corner-cutting by over-eager policemen who should know better, it often involves officers working in the field of obscene publications and drugs – usually cannabis. Public attitudes on these subjects are highly ambiguous, far more so than on any other topic. Last year my own paper ran a story which showed that even the sample of magistrates questioned in a Home Office survey no longer regarded cannabis smoking as any worse than other misdemeanours like being drunk.

It follows that where public opinion is so at variance with the law, the *opportunities* for corruption are bound to multiply. People *will* smoke cannabis just as much as they will drink whisky or beer. What we have with pornography and cannabis is a form of prohibition. Policemen in the squads concerned are reluctant, I have found, to talk freely about these problems because of the position they are in. This is ironical because it is the police who are suffering most from these bad laws. The corruption in the police is more than ever a symptom of some deeper sickness. But it is not that we have suddenly acquired a crop of bad apples.

PETER WATSON

Sunday Times
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Elvira Barney

Sir, In the detailed and complimentary review of my *Trial of Elvira Barney*, a book which Mr C. H. Rolph pays me the honour of quoting (NS 7 January), your critic asks the meaning of the sentence contained in the editor's note that prefaces the introduction to the trial, 'She danced no better than she shot' – going on to clarify my meaning with a query 'What does that mean, in relation to someone acquitted of shooting at all?' Mr Rolph answers himself by then asking: 'As a better shot, would she have merely wounded her lover, perhaps to teach him a lesson? Or would she have shot herself, which was what she claimed to have intended?' Mr Rolph's first guess was what I intended to convey. Exactly that. I know to my cost that Mrs Barney was a bad dancer – as any reader of the work under review will quickly gather – and it is my belief that on the fateful early morning in question she was an equally bad shot. A better markswoman would have fired wide of the mark (as she had done on previous occasions) merely to frighten and, at the most, to wound Stephen. As it was she killed the thing she cared for most of all. Her state, after a heavy day's drinking, proved a contributory factor to the melodramatic act of this frustrated actress, who thrived on 'scenes' when high on cocaine or alcohol, as she was on the night in question; what might have been just another routine scene – played out by an amateur who saw herself as The Thwarted Heroine – misfired. It is also my contention, based upon material made available to me during many months of research on Elvira and her trend-setting acquaintances of yesteryear, that there was another reason for further threats through the presence of a person who lived not far from the scene of the shooting; a *he*, though, not a she (as was suggested at the time) – one who had been with both killer and killed only a few hours earlier. In my view all that remains a mystery in Elvira's trial was a surprising verdict that the prisoner at the bar should have been acquitted on other charges than murder. The then pop press had a field-day and overnight the heroine in the book was turned into the Notorious Mrs Barney; the 'curtain' to whose life came when she was found dead four years later. Elvira was only 31 . . .

PETER COTES

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Strauss's Strategy

Sir, There is a serious error in Mr Pimlott's article 'Tribune and the Thirties' (NS 7 January) which in the interests of historical accuracy and the survivors of the Unity Campaign needs correction. It is not true that 'what "Unity" or "United Front" actually meant was the affiliation or reaffiliation to Labour of the Communist Party and perhaps the ILP as well'.

Neither Sir Stafford Cripps nor any other of the members of the Labour Party actively engaged in the campaign desired this and we frequently said so. What we wanted to bring about was a determined cooperative effort by all the Left parties aimed at ousting Chamberlain at the next election on an appeal to end appeasement, and to oppose fascist aggression in Spain and elsewhere. We wanted a new government that would seek to establish a strong military alliance with all the anti-fascist nations of Europe, and in particular the Soviet Union and France, for the prevention of Hitler's war.

We believed that such a policy would have the overwhelming support of the electorate. Its success would have been impeded rather than advanced by an irrelevant demand for the affiliation of Communists into the Labour Party.

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Anti-Gorer

Sir, I am writing to protest about the review of Sue Sharpe's book *Just Like a Girl* (NS 7 January). I happen to be one of the girls Sue interviewed for her book – I talked about my experiences of school. I thought the review was very unfair, because it made out that women's liberationists are hysterical propagandists, and that the book showed contempt for women who have children. Both these things are totally untrue. But they're the sort of things I used to think about women's liberation before I met any of the people involved, and when the only information I had was what I read in the *Daily Mirror*. It would have been much better if someone who knew a bit about the women's movement and its aims could have written the review.

BRIDGET KING

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Aims for What?

Sir, Mr J. W. Bruegel (Letters 14 January) disputes our statement that Adolf Hitler said in February 1941 that 'basically National Socialism and Marxism are the same'. I would refer Mr Bruegel to the report of Hitler's speech of February 1941 in *The Bulletin of International News*, published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol. XVIII No. 5, page 269, dated 8 March 1941. The report states the speech was broadcast in Germany. In it Hitler mentions that Germany had to break away from the old bourgeois parties, and 'basically, National Socialism and Marxism are the same'. He concluded that the Nazi Party did not come in to defend class interests but to bring about the unity of the German nation.

I notice that Mr Bruegel totally evades my point that Hitler was interested in bringing in economic socialism. In fact two of the main themes in Hitler's wartime 'Table Talk' were that of future plans for economic socialism and the need to emulate the British pride in India by making Eastern Europe and Russia take on that role for Germany.

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Sir, It seems to me that it is Mr Ivens rather than Mr Cohen who is 'obtuse about logic'. Hitler said a lot of things at different times with no intention either to lie or to tell the truth, but only with the intention of furthering his political ends. The question, therefore, is not whether Hitler's statement is true but whether Mr Ivens believes it to be true.

Marxism and National Socialism are basically *different* both in theory and practice. The extent of the difference in practice may be gauged by the continuing hostility between Marxists and Fascists in e.g. Southern Africa and South America.

But what are we to think, in any case, of an association which coopts the late Adolf Hitler as a 'guru' or prophet (deceased)? It seems such a short time since his reputation in this part of the world was rather on a par with that of the devil. Perhaps Mr Ivens has an extra long spoon?

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No Back to the Front

Sir, Your contributor Robert Silver (NS 14 January) no doubt rests confident in his belief in 'progress'. As an insurance against mistaking fashion for progress, I suggest he hold in reserve a little of the contempt and pity he is ready to lavish on followers of the National Front for the children bred by the trendy Left out of uncontrolled public spending during the last 15 years.

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Wolf Biermann

Sir, Readers of Biermann's *Brecht, Your Posterity* (NS 14 January) might like to know that a selection of Wolf Biermann's *Poems and Songs*, translated by Steve Gooch and prefaced by an interview with Stuart Hood, will be published this Spring by Pluto Press.

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On Target

Sir, John Jones, reviewing the first two volumes of the Locke correspondence (NS 14 January), says that the *Listener* is 'waiting until the set is complete, in 1979, to notice the work'. This is not so. The *Listener*'s review, by John Dunn of King's College, Cambridge, will be published in next week's issue (27 January).

DERWENT MAY

The Listener
Broadcasting House
London W1

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Michael Davie

The Conversations

The American Police State by DAVID WISE
Random House $12.95

My spirits did not immediately lift at the sight of yet another thick book about the malpractices, in recent years, of the American government. Having lived in Washington during both Watergate summers, and having ever since avidly consumed every available story and report about America's 'secret government', I concluded long ago that what was needed was not more dirt about the wickedness of J. Edgar Hoover or John Ehrlichman, but a theory about the cause of the corruption.

Obviously, the institutions of control failed. Old Senator Stennis said he was shocked when he learned, not long ago, about the CIA's assassination squads and its illegal activities inside the US. 'I'm ashamed,' he said, 'but of course I knew nothing about it.' He was probably telling the truth; yet Stennis for years was Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and of its sub-committee that was supposed to supervise the CIA. More than public accountability failed, though. The democratic instinct itself, which Americophile optimists like myself had assumed to survive even in the CIA and the FBI – let alone the White House – failed too. Opening Mr Wise's book, I felt that what was needed was more thought, not more fact.

I underestimated both Mr Wise and the extent of the corruption. Mr Wise is a former chief of the Washington bureau of the New York *Herald Tribune*. He has lived and worked in Washington for nearly 20 years; and he belongs to the (fortunately) large body of American journalists who believe in collecting the facts before they let fly with their opinions. After the last four years, one may well conclude that democracy in America depends on these reporters as much as on any other group. To write his book, Mr Wise has not only mastered the vast quantities of documents that have poured out of Congressional Committees (39 volumes from the House of Representatives Nixon impeachment investigation alone), the records (published and unpublished) of the Senate Watergate Committee, and the Rockefeller Report to the President on the CIA's 'activities' within the US, but has conducted 'more than 200 interviews'. The subtitle of his book is 'The Government against the People'. He covers government break-ins, wiretapping, bugging, mail-opening, blackmail, and attempted assassination. Most British readers will have read something about the activities of the US government under each of these headings; but very few will have taken in the full range of the outrages.

The FBI, I learned for the first time, in 1964 began to think about how they could discredit Martin Luther King as a black leader in order to replace him with someone else. By the autumn of 1964 the FBI was not only spreading stories about King's alleged sexual practices but also claiming that he was under the complete control of the Communist Party. I learned too that President Johnson used the FBI to help him establish control of the 1964 Democratic Convention in Atlantic City; Vice-President Hubert Humphrey had the help of the Chicago branch of the FBI, also for his own political ends, at the Democratic Convention of 1968. The Inland Revenue Service ran its own intelligence system, secretly, to collect information about the sexual habits of taxpayers. One of the men in charge of the programme justified it by explaining that 'excesses in the sex or drinking area could presumably convey the picture that an individual under investigation was spending more than his or her net worth'. To this end, the IRS used paid informers.

All these revelations, and many, many more, have come out in the past four years. Exactly four years ago this week, the jury in the first Watergate trial sat sequestered in a Washington hotel room and watched Nixon's triumphant inaugural parade on television. As the cover-up thereafter slowly unravelled, it was shocking enough that the White House had, for instance, paid hush-money to the Watergate burglars. Since then, as Mr Wise says, it has become plain that the significance of Watergate was not simply as evidence that the White House was full of crooks; it was the first glimpse of the gigantic misuse, over many years, of the police power of the American state, particularly against dissenters.

In October 1969, President Nixon dined with Hoover, the director of the FBI. Accompanying Nixon to the dinner were John Mitchell, the Attorney General, and John Ehrlichman, the counsel to the President. Ehrlichman later told Mr Wise, in an interview, that the four men 'for hours' discussed government burglaries. 'Hoover regaled us with stories of "black bag" jobs, hair-raising escapes, and so on. "Wonderful," the President kept saying. "How about that, John?"' All those present took it for granted that the President had the right to send in government burglars at will, in the name of 'national security'. In 1975, it was officially acknowledged, during Congressional investigations, that the FBI over the years had engaged in hundreds of burglaries and break-ins in the name of 'national security'. The FBI is a unit of the Department of Justice, which is, as Mr Wise sourly remarks, 'the agency of the Federal Government responsible for enforcing the law, not breaking it'. He estimates that between 1940 and October 1975 the government installed 8,239 national security telephone taps and 2,465 microphones. One may assume a rough correspondence between the number of microphones installed and the number of break-ins required to install them.

Many taps had nothing whatever to do with 'national security'. The Nixon administration tapped, for instance, John Sears, a White House aide who last year became Governor Reagan's presidential campaign manager. It is still not clear why Sears was tapped; he was also placed under 24-hour surveillance. It may have been because he was picked up talking to Henry Brandon, the *Sunday Times* correspondent, on the telephone tap the White House put on *him* (for a year and eight months).

The tapping of Brandon was one of the so-called 'Kissinger taps'. The Nixon White House tapped 17 government aides and journalists, and the names of 14 of these were supplied to the FBI by Kissinger, though he has tried hard to deny it. Mr Wise concludes that he has been lying. These taps go to the heart of the Watergate mystery, and to some extent – even more than other, grosser malpractices – to the heart of all the illegalities and abuses of power committed over the years by the US government.

The Nixon White House, to be sure, was interested in 'screwing' its political enemies (John Dean's word). But it was no less interested in maintaining the secrecy of its own operations, particularly in foreign policy. In March 1969 the US began to bomb Cambodia, a fact known only to a handful of officials. On 9 May 1969 the *New York Times* printed a story about the bombing (which very few people even noticed). At once, in pursuit of the leak, the Administration got the FBI to start tapping telephones, using a procedure right outside the Bureau's normal arrangements. Before long, because the FBI was less enthusiastic and more nervous than the Nixon White House about using illegal means to pursue 'enemies' and stop leaks, the White House set up its own illegal unit, the Plumbers. What the Plumbers were doing in the Watergate building is still obscure; so is the CIA connection with the break-in and the cover-up. But the point is that the original reason why the Nixon White House engaged in illegal tapping and bugging was to protect the secrecy of its foreign policy. The cover-up was undertaken, evidently, because it was necessary to conceal, at all costs, the dubious operations engaged in long before the Watergate fiasco. 'Watergate' was by no means a purely domestic event; and the revelations of the past four years show just how much there was to conceal. Virtually the entire intelligence community of the US was at risk; so was the Administration's foreign policy – at least in the view of the Administration.

Editorial assessments of the Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy, now being published, discuss it in isolation. By doing so they miss the point, in my opinion. It was Nixon's foreign policy that led to Nixon's attempted subversion of the American con-

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stitution. Mr Wise quotes Madison: and as usual one of the Founding Fathers hit the nail on the head. 'Perhaps it is a universal truth,' Madison wrote to Jefferson in 1798, 'that the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against dangers real or pretended from abroad.'

Clive James

The Ideal Biographer

Kennedy by LORD LONGFORD *Weidenfeld* £5.95

I have never held with the common belief that Lord Longford is the greatest fool in England. There are professors in Cambridge who have to call the AA to help them park their cars. But it is certainly true that Lord Longford has always appeared to possess the combination of qualities indispensable to anyone wishing to be regarded as a great fool – i.e., considerable mental energy allied with a chronic inability to see the world as it is. On top of all that, of course, and lifting him from the ruck of ordinary great fools into the category of those who might be considered for the title of greatest fool in England, has always been his raging thirst for publicity. This ungovernable passion for getting his name and face in the papers and up on the screen would in itself be a good cause for giving him the title. When you add the piquant fact of his reiterated claims to Humility, it is hard to see how anybody else could possibly be considered for the championship: the laurels should be his in perpetuity.

And yet somehow he has never quite made it. Just as Joe Bugner can do everything but punch and David Bedford can do everything but win, Lord Longford somehow lacks that decisive touch – what football journalists call the ability to *finish* – which characterises the genuinely transcendental fool. However fleeting, there has always been a gleam of sanity in those eyes. There has always been a disturbing hint of normality about his otherwise impeccably absurd behaviour. His new book on Kennedy, for example, is nothing like so ridiculous as one had a right to expect from a man of such distinction. Lapses into common sense disfigure it at every point, while a moment's reflection should have told its author that his major conclusions were far too reasonable for a man of his reputation to be caught arriving at.

Very little of the book proper fulfils the promise of its jacket, which has a toothsome photo of JFK on the front and a rather less aesthetically pleasing, though arguably more awe-inspiring, snap of Lord Longford on the back. Look here, upon this picture, and on this. (The contrast is made no less edifying by the fact that JFK turned out to be the satyr. Which makes you-know-who Hyperion.) 'For John Kennedy, Lord Longford must be the ideal biographer,' the blurb announces, but even though the proposition is self-evident there is a generous willingness to back it up with argument. 'His family and the Kennedys are united both by their Catholic faith and their Irish heritage.' (By the same criterion, Lord Longford must also be the ideal biographer of Sean McStiofain. Doubtless Lord Weidenfeld is already on to this.)

'Moreover,' the rhapsodist continues, as if further proof were needed, 'Lord Longford is at home in the world of power, politics and diplomacy, which the young President entered with so little experience and so much ambition.' The implications here are delightful, but we ought not to revel in them. It is, after all, undoubtedly true that the young President was destined never to attain the long experience of his ideal biographer; and anyway, in the book itself the ideal biographer is less keen to stress his own virtues than you might imagine.

Even more interestingly, he finds it hard to put his whole heart into stressing Kennedy's, either. Here the ideal biographer's legendary naïveté leads him closer to the truth than many sophisticates have been able to go. He quotes with seeming approval Arthur Schlesinger's idea that Kennedy's patronage of writers seemed 'to prefigure a new Augustan age of poetry and power'. That this was always a deeply philistine notion Lord Longford has not critical powers enough to see, but nor is he ready to go along with the still-prevailing myth of the young President's all-devouring intellectual curiosity. Lord Longford is able to see that the young President's wide reading was in fact pretty narrow. He can't quite bring himself to say so, but neither can he bring himself to endorse the contrary opinion. It would have been too much to expect that Lord Longford would follow up these leads and attempt a properly sceptical assessment of the amount of bogusness which went to supporting the Kennedy image. For the moment it is enough, and more than enough, that the ideal biographer's innocent nostrils have detected the odd whiff of hokum.

The nostrils are in remarkable working order, considering the strain they are placed under by his radiant smile. They have also detected at least one red herring. Whatever the chip on Joe Kennedy's shoulder, Lord Longford argues persuasively, there wasn't even a splinter on JFK's. There was no element of revenge in his rise to the top. Here Lord Longford's social instinct stands him in good stead. The ideal biographer, with his wealth of experience, is well aware that the route to the top has nowadays less to do with birth than with star-quality. There is no need for the stars to get in with the well-born. The well-born are too keen to get in with the stars. Lord Longford has never actually sat down and worked all this out, but he *feels* it, being a star himself. He can respond to the sheer kick JFK got out of being on the make, since he himself is never off it.

But if innocence has pluses on top of its minuses, it has even more minuses on top of its pluses. Sophisticates profess to admire the young President's achievements as a womaniser. The ideal biographer is too uncomplicated to be led into such a trap. 'I am bound to record my opinion that here was a serious defect in his character.' So far, so true; but Lord Longford in his pious reticence is unable to follow the matter up. A pity, because the subject ought to be illuminating. It is not just for moral reasons that a Don Juan is a sad thing to be.

Lord Longford thinks that JFK was growing in the job and would have grown further, all the way to greatness. The proofs he adduces are not as substantial as he thinks they are. Nor is his otherwise salutary naïveté a sufficient instrument to get very far with the job of separating myths from realities. He can see that Kennedy's fine phrases were put in his mouth by Theodore Sorensen but can't see that the fine phrases were poor stuff whoever composed them. Kennedy was perfect casting as president only in the sense that the presidency is an actor's role. It ought not to be. So the ideal biographer leaves all the real issues untouched. But that his book does not confuse them further is a disheartening portent. Lord Longford can no longer be counted on to say the one irrelevant thing. We could be witnessing the start of an irreversible decline into coherence.

Paul Theroux

Heart Ike

Past Forgetting by KAY SUMMERSBY MORGAN *Collins* £4.95

Kathleen Helen McCarthy-Morrogh Summersby Morgan was, as everyone who read her earlier book, *Eisenhower Was My Boss*, knows, Ike's driver during the war; but in the event it was he who took her for a ride. The title of this book is from the Noël Coward play *Bittersweet* (*I'll See You Again*) yet the mood of the book owes a great deal to the sad war-time romance ('Hold your horses. You'll get to Paris one of these days') and indeed it reads like a libretto full of Cowardy custard and thwarted coitus: Kay, a deb and an absolute corker, is a driver in the Motor Transport Corps; she is first assigned to Post Number One in the East End of London ('Our Cockney neighbours there used to jeer at the "society girls playing war". Who could blame them?') and then to Eisenhower, whom she regards as 'a two-star nonentity'; but the General is kind to her, and he's promoted; apart from target-practice shooting at tin-cans in the back garden he has no diversions; he makes a pass (if that is the word – he's pretty vague most of the time) and they fall in love. The General and his driver! The bald Yank and the svelte deb! War! Love! Pass the Kleenex and play that song again!

Nor is this all, for the General, the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces with a thatch of medals on his breast pocket, leading the charge on behalf of the Western world and attempting to preserve

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civilisation as we know it, is, when the shades are drawn and the aides sent away, unable to cut the mustard. This lack of *cojones* never seemed to bother him, for although congress was not achieved by the couple, Ike blithely promised her not just a child but a male one. He seemed to have a bottomless capacity for self-deception. 'What's *your* favourite song?' asks Kay, after telling him that hers is *I'll See You Again*. His aide interrupts and says that Ike's favourite tune is *The Beer Barrel Polka*. 'Not at all,' says Ike and offers Kay the romantic *One Dozen Roses*. Can he have forgotten (the fact appears in Perle Mesta's memoirs) that his favourite song was *Abdul Abull-bull Amir* and that he could, with a little encouragement, sing every verse?

This love affair is sadly remembered, tenderly told, but touched with farce. Kay had suppressed it until, informed that she had cancer, she felt she had to put the record straight, and she wrote it on her death-bed. If only there was more to tell! If only there had been a little physical pleasure to recall in the 30-odd years she spent in relative obscurity. But it was all a very soldierly business; duty was everything, and some of the most passionate exchanges take place when Kay is at the wheel of the car and Ike is in the back seat, speaking to her reflection in the rear-view mirror. And Ike was in the back seat in another sense. He had told General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, that he wished to divorce Mamie and marry Kay. Marshall replied sternly that he would allow no such thing and furthermore, if Ike disobeyed him, he would make Ike's life 'a living hell'. The episode provides a nice insight into the American chain-of-command, and Ike appears to have swallowed his pride and got on with the job of winning the war.

In spite of Kay's remarkable compassion and intentionally loving portrait she never, perhaps owing to her simple style and strong loyalty, seems to understand Ike's ambition, his weakness, his Kansas cunning or his rather bemused idea of power, which later led him to appoint a cabinet composed entirely of millionaires ('eight millionaires and a plumber', as the papers said at the time – the plumber left after 11 months). The conversations she reports are rosy in retrospect, but the notes he slipped her and that last magisterial brush-off he sent her reveal Ike to have been less than candid, artless, and simply non-committal. Perhaps he had already got his marching orders from Marshall, perhaps – like many other public figures – he couldn't bear a private life, even with a woman who was willing to give him everything.

In the end one sees him (even if Kay doesn't) trying to disengage himself and finally he slams the door in her face and she's jilted. I found it hard not to see her as a heroine and the whole affair as convincingly operatic, the sad tale that's best for winter. Well, it had a sequel, but Kay didn't figure in it. In 1952, after he'd won the war but lost the rest of his hair, impotent, inexperienced in politics, eater of crow and taker of orders, a bad golfer and not particularly sound in wind or limb, there was really no choice but to make him President of the United States, where he was to have a very different sort of congress to contend with.

Anthony Howard

The Candidate

The Education of a Public Man by HUBERT H. HUMPHREY *Weidenfeld* £10.00

Even on the presidential campaign trail Hubert Humphrey was always a homespun political hero. 'By golly' would begin one sentence, 'Good grief' would open the next – and, while his younger listeners were still looking at one another in blank disbelief, out from underneath that domed forehead and those suspiciously dark circumflex eyebrows would come some guileless statement like 'Oh boy, we Americans, aren't we just a bunch of doers'. In that sense this book, presumably intended initially as a campaign autobiography and now issued almost as a *Nunc Dimittis*, certainly rings true: indeed, it carries the authentic Humphrey hallmark on every page. Here is our Hubert on election day 1968, frothing like a milk-shake: 'What a crowd, what a glorious crowd – look at them, that's what it is all about. Man, they make the juices flow.' And here he is again the next day, drained to the dregs, knowing now that he has lost: 'What am I going to do? There isn't anything I want to do. I wanted to be President.'

He had wanted that, of course, almost from the beginning – or at least from the time in 1948 (a story unrelated here) that he sent a delegation of three of his friends to Mrs Roosevelt to inquire whether, in her view, it had been a help or a hindrance to FDR to be a vice-presidential candidate before becoming a presidential one. Eight years later he thought he had got the vice-presidential nomination locked up – until Adlai Stevenson ('whose immense distinction soon overcame my personal hurt') threw him over in 1956 by throwing the choice of his running-mate open to the convention rather than making the selection himself. But four years later, undaunted, Hubert was up and running again, this time into the sands against the Kennedys in Wisconsin and West Virginia. Never mind, 'you can't' – as Humphrey himself might have said (and probably did) – 'keep a good man down'. In 1964 he finally made it at least to the vice-presidency, as Lyndon Johnson's anointed choice. There followed four years of emasculation ('You know the trouble with Hubert?' said Lyndon, 'He cries too much') until in 1968 he was actually allowed to bear his party's blood-stained Vietnam

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standard into the 1968 election – only to lose to, of all people, Richard Nixon. Those old juices, however, continued to flow. It was not for any want of trying on Humphrey's part that he wasn't again the Democratic Party's nominee in 1972 – or, for that matter, that another (younger) Democrat is taking his residence in the White House this week.

'Whatever became of Hubert?' Tom Lehrer used to sing – and this book probably provides as complete an answer as we are ever likely to get. Of course it was written before he got his chauffeur-driven limousine and his extra £4,000 a year as deputy president *pro tem.* of the Senate (in itself, sadly, another consolation prize – this time for not having been elected Senate Majority Leader). But nothing, in fact, ever did *happen* to Hubert. With lots of gifts of personal bonhomie but without any form of political backbone, he remained to the end 'the puppy-dog' (in Senator Fulbright's dismissive phrase) who just wagged his tail and longed to be liked. The desire to be popular and to succeed went back to the beginning. 'Oh Bucky,' he wrote to his fiancée when he was only 24,

> I can see how some day, if you and I just apply ourselves and make up our minds to work for bigger things, how we can some day live here in Washington . . . Washington thrills me to my very fingertips. I simply revel and beam with delight in this realm of politics and government. Oh gosh, I hope my dream comes true.

Strangely, it almost did, stopping short only at the gates of the White House. For Hubert Humphrey the fact that he did not go all the way plainly remains a massive disappointment. For the rest of us, Richard Nixon notwithstanding, it increasingly looks like a merciful deliverance.

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DENT

Nicholas Bethell

Scales of Evil

Nemesis at Potsdam by ALFRED M. DE ZAYAS
Routledge £5.95

Winston Churchill, Victor Gollancz, Bertrand Russell and Albert Schweitzer all spoke out against the mass expulsion of Germans from Eastern and Central Europe at the end of the second world war. The British and American press printed many accounts of the arrival of trains full of these people, often starved, frozen or crushed to death. There was nothing secret about it. Yet somehow consciences were not pricked and sympathies were not stirred. Hardly anyone – Victor Gollancz was a memorable exception – felt obliged to do anything to stop the cruelty or to help the victims. It went on until, Mr de Zayas estimates, 16 million Germans had been expelled, of whom 2 million perished.

It was allowed to happen, the author points out, because of the theory that the German people bore collective guilt for the crimes of the Nazi system. 'The German people as a whole must have it driven home to them that the whole nation has been engaged in a lawless conspiracy against the decencies of modern civilisation,' wrote President Roosevelt in August 1944. In March 1945, Clement Attlee said in the House of Commons that the Germans 'are not entitled to appeal on the basis of the moral laws that they have disregarded or the pity and mercy that they have never extended to any others'.

Germany was to be punished. If the USSR wanted to acquire territory in the West, this seemed only fair, after all that she had suffered and after she had borne the brunt of the war. It also seemed fair that Russia should acquire territory at Germany's expense, not Poland's. And so the decisions were taken. Germany was to be dismembered yet again. Poland was to be shunted, as if on wheels, about 150 miles to the west. All Germans from Poland, East Prussia, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States were to be expelled. Never again was a German government to be in a position to exploit its minorities in Slav countries as a pretext for another military adventure.

In the USSR, quite understandably, anti-German feelings were even stronger. Not only the Nazis but also the German army had slaughtered Russian soldiers and civilians by the million. The novelist Ilya Ehrenburg was thought no extremist when he wrote in 1942:

> Kill. Nothing in Germany is guiltless, neither the living nor the yet unborn. Follow the words of Comrade Stalin and crush forever the fascist beast in its den. Break the racial pride of the German woman. Take her as your legitimate booty.

The Red Army followed this advice to the letter when they entered Germany and, in George Kennan's words, 'swept the native population clean in a manner that had no parallel since the days of the Asiatic hordes'.

By the nature of things this is a subject amply described in the German language, but hardly at all in English. Mr de Zayas's book is therefore a useful contribution, a short account of the terrible story, based mainly on published documents and newspaper articles. But it leaves the story half untold. It leaves the field open for another author, who has more time to spare collecting documents and eye-witness testimony.

For instance, the author states baldly: 'The revenge taken upon the simple German peasants of East Prussia or the Sudetenland was no less abominable than the Nazi crimes that had provoked it.' This is a serious allegation, a controversial value judgment, one which he does not justify by his sparse description of Soviet, Polish and Czech brutality. There can be no doubt that this brutality happened, but the author needs to adduce more facts before comparing it to that of the Nazis. Again, he alleges that in many internment camps for Germans 'sadism was given free rein' – an accusation which he does not prove.

The author correctly points out the injustice whereby the ordinary Sudeten German farmer had to 'pay the bill' for Hitler's crimes against Czechoslovakia, but he spoils his argument by the suggestion, which few will accept, that the preservation of the Munich Agreement frontiers of Czechoslovakia would have made the transfers unnecessary. He also underplays the crimes of the *Volksdeutsche* in Poland, referring only to 'their condescending treatment of Slavic peoples'. The evidence shows that the *Volksdeutsche* played their full part in Hitler's treatment of the Poles, in the murder of 20 per cent of the Polish population.

This short book raises too many questions and answers them too glibly. Was it fair to punish the German people, who showed little or no resistance to Hitler, at least during his years of success? Where should Poland be, as far east as Kiev or as far west as Szczecin? Is there a 'scale of evil' by which one can compare the barbaric savagery of the Red Army in 1945 with the Nazis' policy of systematic cold-blooded extermination? Which is the most important factor, the numbers of deaths or the thoughts in the minds of the killers?

Even though Mr de Zayas does not tackle these questions, he will at least convince the British and American reader of the callousness which war induced among the Western leaders. 'While we have no desire to be unduly cruel to Germany,' said President Truman in December 1945, 'I cannot feel any great sympathy for those who caused the death of so many human beings.' It is statements such as this, typical of the atmosphere of those months, which the author condemns as responsible for the undoubted tragedy which overtook so many millions of Germans. 'The present study is dedicated to the idea of the *dignitas humana*, which is at the base of our civilisation,' he writes grandly at the end of his introduction, in which he also looks forward to the day when 'unforeseeable political developments' will allow a revision of the Oder-Neisse frontier. He has tried to document a monumental horror story, but he has only partly succeeded, neglecting the pursuit of facts for an over-indulgence in opinion.

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Mervyn Jones

My Lai Lies

The My Lai Massacre and its Cover-Up by WILLIAM R. PEERS *Collier-Macmillan* £2.25

This book contains the report made by General Peers, US Army, who conducted an official inquiry into the war crime committed in 1968 at the Vietnamese village known (incorrectly, as a matter of fact) as My Lai. Few people are likely to plough through the volume, which is written in military-bureaucratic jargon and produced in type that tortures the eyes. The publishers are not to be congratulated; they could have prefaced the report with an essay by someone capable of bringing home the full meaning of the event – Mary McCarthy, for instance – instead of a boring introduction by three lawyers who cavil at the shortcomings of General Peers. To my mind, considering that he's just a plain old general and not Emile Zola or Solzhenitsyn, he did a pretty good job. Here is the truth, or as much of it as we'll ever get (some of the officers involved refused to testify to the inquiry). Now that the Vietnam war is over and the US has a President who had nothing to do with it, what matters is that someone should resolve that the women and children of My Lai did not die altogether in vain.

One man emerges with honour, a helicopter serviceman called Warrant Officer Thompson. He saw the civilians being herded together for shooting, he landed and saved some of them, he made a speedy and horrified report to his superiors. Everybody else lied or tried to hush the matter up, including the chaplain whose help Thompson sought. Lieutenant-Colonel Barker, commanding the force which attacked My Lai, faked the number of dead and made a report describing a pitched battle which never happened. Colonel Henderson, one step higher, claimed to have made an investigation which was in fact farcical, and his account is stigmatised by Peers as 'knowingly false and deceptive'. He did, in the immediate aftermath and under the impact of Thompson's complaints, order Captain Medina (whose men had done most of the killing) to go back through the village to establish the age and sex of the dead and how they had died, but this order was countermanded by Major-General Koster, one step up again. Obvious questions were never asked, documents disappeared, and there were glaring contradictions and evasions in the testimony which Peers eventually heard.

Barker, the man primarily responsible since he directed the operation, was killed soon afterwards. Medina, said by the Peers report to have 'planned, ordered and supervised the execution by his company of an unlawful operation', was later acquitted by a military court. An actual killer, Lieutenant Calley, was found guilty and served three years in fairly comfortable military confinement; he has now been released; Koster was censured and demoted. Justice hasn't exactly been done, but it can be argued that My Lai is the only war crime in history to have been admitted and punished at all except after the overthrow of the political regime that waged the war.

As a professional who had been wearing his uniform contentedly since 1938, Peers was earnestly concerned to know how this awful thing – the systematic slaughter of at least 200 defenceless people – could have happened. He worried over the racist feeling toward 'gooks' evident among the troops, and came up with this classical understatement: 'It is considered likely that the unfavourable attitude of some of the men of Task Force Barker toward the Vietnamese was a contributing factor.' He points out that My Lai was a Vietcong stronghold – a kind of Crossmaglen – and officers like Barker and Medina briefed their men to assume that any elderly peasant, woman or youth was more likely than not to be helping the enemy. 'We knew we were supposed to kill everyone in the village,' a soldier in Medina's company testified. Calley said at his trial: 'I didn't discriminate between individuals in the village, sir. They were all the enemy, they were all to be destroyed, sir.'

As Peers says, such 'non-discrimination' runs counter to standing instructions given to US commanders and in theory passed on to the soldiers, which emphasised that people could be living in places controlled by the enemy because they couldn't help it or even against their will. But since the war was the kind of war that it was, the Barker-Medina school of thought was bound to gain the upper hand. Thus, although 'property destruction' was forbidden on paper, Peers records that 'villages and fields were often burned to prevent their use by the rebel elements'. Free fire zones, defined by agreement with the South Vietnamese Government (GVN in this initial-spattered report), were supposed to be 'free of any known populace'. But we read that My Lai was made a free fire zone because the residents 'were considered to be VC, or VC sympathisers at a minimum, by GVN authorities'. Consider, too, this account of a normal operation at a place called An Thinh:

> Blocking the escape routes and using gunships effectively, the battalion sent one company to sweep the village. As the enemy tried to flee, they were engaged by gunships and the units in the blocking position. At the end of the day, it was reported that 83 VC had been killed and 34 weapons captured, while the US forces had five men wounded.

Remembering that one of Barker's lies was to describe all the dead as VC, and reflecting on the oddity of 83 rebel fighters meeting their deaths and discarding only 34 weapons, it's not hard to suspect that An Thinh was another My Lai – without its Warrant Officer Thompson.

In the end, there's only one thing to say: when people are subjected to a power which they are determined to resist, the means of enforcing that power will be Amritsar or Lidice, My Lai or Soweto.

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Godfrey Hodgson

Except US

The Spoiled Child of the Western World by HENRY FAIRLIE *Sheldon Press* £4.95

Henry Fairlie defines the 'spoiled child' of his title as 'the vast commonalty of the middle class of the United States'. The title, I think, is seriously misleading. Unless I have utterly misunderstood his argument, what Fairlie is saying is that this vast commonalty of the American people is in danger not so much of being spoiled as of being disinherited.

The title suggests, too, that the book is yet another elitist onslaught on the way the 'masses' have been spoiled by 'affluence'. But one of the best things in the book is Fairlie's own onslaught on what he calls 'the fiction of the masses', in which he deals severely with such elitist, neo-conservative writers as Hannah Arendt and Irving Kristol. And for me the very best thing in it is a chapter called 'The Boundaries of Affluence', in which he argues, correctly beyond a doubt, that American society is becoming less equal and less democratic.

'It is a falsehood,' Fairlie maintains, 'to say that the majority of the American people are affluent.' Statistics demonstrate that the average income even for a skilled worker (less than $10,000 a year at the beginning of the Seventies) is well under the level officially regarded by the US government as a 'moderate living standard':

> The affluence that is so much remarked on is creating a habit of privilege for the few . . . There is a growing rationalization and vindication of privilege, and a sullen toleration of it by those who do not share in it that is wholly alien to the character and intent of American society.

This is the principal theme and thesis of the book: that America is 'the country that is an idea, and the idea that is a country', and that the country is in danger of betraying the idea.

The quintessential American idea, for Fairlie, is that fusion of individual liberty and social equality which was compressed, with such characteristically awkward force, into the opening lines of Walt Whitman's 'Leaves of Grass':

> One's-self I sing, a single separate person,
> Yet utter the word Democratic, the
> word En-Masse.

Judged by the standard of its own patriotic rhetoric, which has had since the beginning a quality of fervour, of religiose abstraction and hyperbole, it is clearly arguable that the US is indeed now falling short of its ideals. Specifically, it would be hard to deny that Fairlie is right in speaking of a 'revolt of the privileged' in the US in the past 30 years, both in political and in intellectual terms. But the fact is that there has always been in the United States a consistent dualism. It has been a pilgrimage. It has also been an enterprise. The idea has been real. But it has coexisted from the start with injustice, cynicism and slavery.

Fairlie, like many American intellectuals – though for less obviously self-flattering reasons – is much preoccupied with the supposed 'death of Europe'. He places this event earlier than most would do, in the late 17th century, and associates it with that loss of religious superstition on the part of European intellectuals which I would regard as the necessary precondition of their greatest achievements. He also follows the American practice in stressing the unique significance of the American revolution, and consequently undervaluing the French revolution, the rise of socialism with its crucial identification of the connection between political and economic emancipation, and the various revolutions, violent and non-violent, of the 20th century. I here confess to a suspicion that American intellectuals will only begin to understand their own society when they abandon this tradition of 'American exceptionalism'. And I confess to a further impression that the most perceptive of them are already beginning to abandon it.

There are, for me, other weaknesses in Fairlie's argument. He attributes the failure of the specifically American political tradition – and he does lay heavy emphasis on its exceptional character – to a complex of developments, such as the influences of Darwin, Freud, Marx, Einstein and the artistic avant-garde, which have clearly influenced Europe just as much as America; which, indeed, deployed their lethal power after Europe, according to Fairlie, was already moribund.

Fairlie's method also seems to me to be flawed. He often strings together rare quotations in bewildering profusion. In a mere four pages, for example, meditating on the implications of the Death of God, he quotes Santayana, Anthony Burgess, Richard Chase, Bakunin, Gore Vidal, Martin Buber, R. D. Laing, St Augustine, St Bernard, Norman O. Brown, Ozenfant (*qui ça?*), John Osborne, Georg Büchner, Jean Paul, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Robert Birley, Ralph Hendricke, Lionel Abel, William Burroughs and Lionel Trilling. Fairlie himself writes so well, and knows so skilfully how to compress an argument into a few pregnant phrases, that in passages such as these I felt I was reading a first draft.

The omissions are equally striking. A writer committed to the exceptionalism of the American experience ought surely have felt some obligation to deal, however cursorily, with the legacy of slavery, the influence of immigration, the power of corporate business: for those are the truly exceptional elements of the American historical and political experience.

Yet this remains an impressive and a civilised book, learned and witty, intelligent and courageous. The book will stay in my mind, aside from its other virtues, for a single quotation from the Greek poet George Seferis: 'We do not educate the people only to teach them, we educate them also to learn from them.' That is the expression of a democratic sentiment that owes nothing, so far as I know, to America, and all to a living European tradition. Let us hope that Fairlie and his American mentors have prematurely pronounced it dead.

Julian Barnes

Pressgang

Five Days in June by STEFAN HEYM *Hodder* £4.95
A Feast of Snakes by HARRY CREWS *Secker & Warburg* £3.50
Before the Crying Ends by JOHN L. HUGHES *Bodley Head* £3.50

The scariest news for novelists so far this year comes from Wales, hidden in John L. Hughes's back-flap bio. Mr Hughes used to be an untroubled schoolmaster in Pontypridd, with a radio play under his belt, sleeping quietly while the Taff rolled by. Until, that is, the Welsh Arts Council got on to him, and 'persuaded him to take time off from teaching in order to write a novel'. Persuaded: we all know what that means – the leek up the left nostril, the crump of the blunt chequebook. And this, doubtless, is only the beginning: soon, not only will novelists not be allowed to go unpublished, but ordinary people will no longer be allowed not to be novelists. In popular mythology, the men with the television detector vans will be superseded by the men from the Arts Council. Lace curtains will twitch anxiously: 'Don't go out just yet, Dai, I don't want you coming back all contracted up and wired to one of them writing machines.'

Some places, of course, have yet to catch up. In East Germany, the old-fashioned system of not allowing you to publish things still obtains: a situation which tempts Stefan Heym's British publishers, understandably enough, to try and have their cake and eat it. On the one hand, Heym is a dissident, his last two novels have been

Peter Redgrove

In the Cutting

Moths of stiff rust spread wing
Over the old cyclotron
Wedged in the railway cutting,
A mile-long fuselage,
Ports bolted, welded;
But I know what grows
Where the atoms parted and glittered
Where matter sped so fast
Matter turned into light:

The old spider is cramming
With gossamer the cyclotron
And its velleities muffle
The unused atomic chapel
And where sweating science
Prayed for scintilla,
Clematis tangles night.

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published in the DDR only after long discussion, and the present one is still banned; on the other, *Five Days in June*, which deals comprehensibly with the causes of the 1953 strike by East Berlin workers against norm raises, is 'no political tract'. It's true that various questions of emotional loyalty are thrown up by the strike, but the central personal drama is that of a trade unionist's political conscience; while the helpings of sex appear particularly contrived beside, say, a canteen argument over the posting of an illegal notice. Unquestionably, the novel's driving force is dialectical passion; and Heym's account of a historic protest, and his practical comments on it, are our main reasons for curiosity.

Five Days in June purports to be as documentary as possible, with quotes from newspapers, ministerial statements, and American zone radio; yet often, oddly, one is left grasping for more detail. This seems less a matter of being an insufficiently politicised reader, more of the fact that Socialist Realism, compared to, for instance, Zola's realism, is often inadequate. One is never told what the workers in the factory which occupies most of the novel are actually making; but one is told, with spurious precision, when a girl opens a secret document, that 'the rate of her pulse rose from 78 to 96'. Workers grumble about the government's previous mistakes; but we are given no hint of what these mistakes are until a speech of Ulbricht's is quoted two-thirds of the way through. Not that this vagueness extends to the novel's robust and serious centre, where the political questions are sharply crystallised. What does it mean when workers strike against a workers' government? How far do you order people to do what you know is good for them? When does criticism become counter-productive? Heym's sane but probably unacceptable answers emerge in a unionist's closing speech to a girl secretary; though if these two pages are not tractish, then neither are the last movements of Socialist symphonies.

Mr Crews's last novel was about a deaf-and-dumb teenager with withered legs, cursed to love a physically perfect woman; surprisingly, it was neither depressing nor sentimental, and full of meanly memorable cracks ('That's the trouble with using your hands to talk, any son of a bitch with a pair of eyes can listen in'). His new novel, which assembles a collection of sick hicks in Mystic, Georgia, and plots them through the annual rattlesnake roundup, provokes a similar brand of wincing laughter. There's Joe Lon Mackey, a well-meaning football player who tends to go beserk and stomp people's faces in; his father, who trains fighting dogs on a treadmill; his withdrawn, faecal-daubing sister; and Duffy Deeter, who gets off to thoughts of Dachau.

The rest loaf around, hustling their balls, drinking their pints of bonded, waiting to get laid, to kill snakes, to break the place up. Mr Crews has a Mexican comic on TV talking about ghetto life: 'He made starving, and rats, and broken plaster, and getting beat on the head by cops just funny as shit'; and he himself has a comparable talent with the ghettoes of the mind. He slides past being merely sick or sad by means of a fierce humour: obsessive, scatological and cruel, teasing wit out of dumb characters and rural-white speech.

> 'I think I love you', she said. 'I think I'll always love you' . . . He stopped and turned his unblinking, slightly drunken gaze on her. 'You gone have to do sompin about this conversation. It's just boring the shit out of me.'

The cheery meanness gradually turns to mayhem; but always it is the empty, internal acres of boredom and craziness which are the most frightening. Mr Crews hits, too, a vital truth about violence: that it can be not only enjoyable but reassuring. When Joe Lon finally goes wild with a shotgun, 'He felt better than he had ever felt in his life. Christ, it was good to be in control again.'

Where Harry Crews is cruel and witty, John L. Hughes, fiction's pressed man, is glum and wry. But once you get past the Gallic dues-paying ('Pontypridd where the gods brought your soul at the beginning of time. And nailed it to a wall') there's a laconic grip to this tale of a collier's adulteries. Mr Hughes is best at smokey, cokey atmospherics – the snooker hall, the coal face, the nighttime ratting expedition. He is less skilled than Mr Crews at retaining sympathy for morally dud characters; but, if nothing else, convinces you that miners, especially in Pontypridd, should get about £100,000 a year.

1902 was the year of

The Wings of the Dove, Just So Stories, The Path to Rome,
The Varieties of Religious Experience, The Hound of the Baskervilles,
L'Immoraliste, Peter Rabbit, Pelléas et Mélisande, The Admirable Crichton
and

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This week's TLS is a 48-page

75th anniversary number

In this special issue:
New etchings by David Hockney of The Man with the Blue Guitar; Keith Thomas writes on Laughter in Tudor and Stuart England.

Other contributors include:
Kenneth Clark, Stuart Piggott, Anthony Burgess, Louis Auchincloss, Dan Jacobson, Hugh Honour, S. S. Prawer, D. J. Enright, Glyn Daniel, David Daiches.

Books reviewed cover subjects ranging from Patronage in the Arts to the Public Face of Archaeology and from Shakespeare and Henry James to Fritz Lang and Moses.

There are poems by Donald Davie and Mark Strand and semantic limericks by Gavin Ewart.

And in a special anniversary feature internationally celebrated authors nominate the most overrated and underrated books of the century.

T·L·S
THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Spurling

The Case of the Heir to Raith

Johan Zoffany *National Portrait Gallery at 15 Carlton House Terrace*
Artists Market from South-West Regions *Warehouse Gallery, 52 Earlham Street*
20th Century British Painting *New Art Centre, 44 Sloane Street*

On a hill-top under a venerable oak-tree six well-dressed, well-set-up gentlemen in the prime of life are gathered convivially. One of them sits behind a handsome round pedestal table, his left arm resting on its polished surface, talking to another standing beside it who is about to bring up a chair. Behind the seated man, a third leans lightly against the tree-trunk, supporting on his free shoulder a fourth, whose right hand dangles over his friend's midriff. A fifth, seated to the right of the table, holds a bottle of wine from which he will shortly fill the slender glasses on the table. Four more bottles wait in a wine-cooler in the foreground. Behind number two is number six, evidently the host, extending his left arm across the tree into the centre of the group and shaking hands with a new arrival, a young man wearing three-cornered hat and boots (all the others being in wigs, white stockings and buckled shoes). There is one other outsider already seated at the opposite end of the group, almost back-to-back with number five, his left ankle on his right knee, staring out of the canvas to the spectator's right. This last is a self-portrait of the artist, Johannes Zauffaly, a German from Frankfurt whose name was corrupted to Johan Zoffany after he had come to England in 1760, nine years before the date of this picture, to seek a better fortune than he could find at the Electoral Court of Trier.

The painting is technically brilliant. Observe the interplay of 16 variously angled arms, the close criss-crossing of even more legs (not forgetting those of the table and chairs), the setting-to-partners of feet, the smooth eddy of glances, the repetition with variation of buttons and fingers (including those reflected in the table-top), the delicate individuality of the faces framed between more-or-less undifferentiated wigs and stocks. Observe further the expressions, socially mobile but not quite smiling, as of men still giving little away, at least until the wine has started flowing. The host, head poked slightly towards his latest guest, has a look of mixed appraisal and welcome, while the young man is a study in eager awkwardness, head thrown back with the air of a prizewinner in some contest, feet turned out and legs energetically splayed in a way that would bode ill to any small knicknacks on low tables, supposing the scene were set indoors. Of the several striking *alfresco* conversation pieces by Zoffany included in the National Portrait Gallery's exhibition, this is perhaps the most accomplished, both in its sense of unposed animation and in its solution to the problem of giving equal prominence to a fairly large group of portraits without stringing them in a frieze across the front of the picture.

The occasion of the gathering is an inheritance. The host is a rich East India trader called Robert Ferguson who is introducing his young nephew William Berry as heir to his Scottish estate of Raith. William's elder brother Robert, with a 'careless disposition', literary interests and an unbusinesslike marriage, has been passed over. But if the vague landscape beyond the hill is the Forth seen from Raith, what is Zoffany doing there and why is he holding and pointing to a document? Are the other five unidentified gentlemen Ferguson's London friends rather than his Scottish ones?

Such are the more practical questions raised by the painting. For me it raises most directly the question that hovers over the whole exhibition: what was Zoffany thinking about when he painted it? Was his mind entirely bent to the matter of perfecting seven portraits on a *pro rata* basis – for his earlier group of the Duke of Atholl fishing by the Tay with his Duchess, seven children, a lemur and a swan he received 20 guineas a head, including the baby but not the monkey or the bird – with his own thrown in *gratis*? Or was he, as his almost churlish position at the edge of the group and his enigmatic but hardly cheerful expression suggest, making the faintest flicker of a comment on these prosperous, self-confident foreigners?

We know very little about him personally, partly because all his papers are said to have been burnt after the death of his widow from cholera in 1832. His incredible skill with surface detail, whose apotheosis is the famous painting done for Queen Charlotte of the Uffizi Tribuna, a room containing not only the accumulated masterpieces of the Grand Ducal collection but also 22 portraits of visiting English connoisseurs (himself among them), appears time and again to preclude anything more inward. Here are the likenesses just so, the features, the expressions, the clothes, the possessions of the rich and great, not only of England, but later of Italy, Vienna and India too, done often with the most subtle balance of splendour and informality: but we are let into no secrets of character, nor offered any kind of artist's vision, whether the poetry of a Gainsborough, the melancholy of a Devis or the drama of a Reynolds. It is as if Zoffany were content to take his sitters at their own valuation. He seems not so much objective as uninvolved, except in the sophisticated technical problems of justifying their faith in his unique contribution to that decidedly favourable valuation.

All the same, this is not quite fair to him. There are warm and appealing portraits of his wife and friends and a small, unfinished head and shoulders of Gainsborough which one might almost call noble. The paintings of beggars and peasants are of models in costume roles, but those of the English Royal Family are of human-beings whose roles are more than half laid aside. The key perhaps lies in the beginnings of his success in his adopted country. What remains of his earliest German work is standard international rococo treatment of classical themes. It was Garrick who rescued the newly-arrived immigrant from painting clockfaces and similar hack work and set him to recording scenes from his own and other actors' stage successes as well as from the home life of Garrick himself in his delectable garden by the Thames. The latter are infinitely more lively, a beguiling vision of the fruits of success for a man whose comparatively humble birth and provincial origins might be partly cancelled by a pre-eminent artistic talent. So one can see the mature Zoffany graduating to become the author-manager of a kind of proscenium-arch theatre of upper-class life, concerned to present his paying performers in their natural roles and accoutrements in what theatrical contracts still call 'a first-class manner'.

This, I think, is his achievement. There are very few 'characters' here, very little overt drama – with the exception of an unusually roughly painted picture of the Paris mob ransacking the Tuileries cellars, an unfinished scene of Captain Cook's death and a crowded Indian cock-fight, dominated by the eccentric figures (one thin, one fat) of Colonel Mordaunt and Hasan Reza Khan, respectively commander of the bodyguard and minister to the Nawab of Oudh. Zoffany shows us ordinary, civil relationships, fleeting, superficial, inapplicable because of the very exactness of his definition to any other time or place, yet the stuff of his sitters' life. The moment of William Berry's introduction as the heir to Raith will be over soon after number two has brought up his chair, almost before number five has filled the glasses, certainly before the four bottles have been emptied.

The Artists Market and the New Art Centre are showing complementary exhibitions of work by contemporary British artists. Peter Lanyon, William Scott and John Hubbard are represented in both galleries – Hubbard by one of his large bright-keyed diptychs with a powerful flame-like movement of colours across the diagonal of both panels and by two recent quarry-paintings, whose darker-toned veils of colour move upwards on the vertical against a light-toned background, as if the spectator were sinking majestically past an escarpment. Terry Frost, Bryan Wynter and an entirely abstract Roger Hilton hang at the Centre; Patrick Heron, John Wells, Alan Davie and two early self-portraits by Peter Blake at the Market. The Market has two spinning steel orreries by Paul Mount and ten small pen-and-ink studies of movement through line – vortices, contours, waves, winds – by W. Barns-Graham who, though she has apparently been long

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in the field, comes as a discovery to me. The Centre weighs in with a shiny white Pasmore construction and a double panel of flat swirling patterns in luminous colours by Eileen Agar. If I wished to convert any unbelievers to the delights of recent British art I would lure them to either or both of these pleasure-houses.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Rogues' Gallery

It is probably a coincidence that Oscar Rabin was arrested only two days after *Aquarius* (LWT) screened interviews with two exiled 'unofficial' Russian artists – there is scant evidence, regrettably, that Peter Hall is all that big in Moscow. From where we're sitting, though, the arrest had to seem a depressingly apt postscript to the exiles' tales of woe – and in particular to those recounted by Alexander Glezer. It was partly because of his enthusiasm for Rabin's work that Glezer embarked on his courageously provocative career as the chief impresario of non-unionised Russian art, and Rabin figures in quite a few of his more chilling yarns. It was Rabin and Glezer together who organised the 1974 open-air show that was smashed up by the police, and at the time of his arrest last Monday Rabin was on his way to Leningrad to mount a similarly nose-thumbing exhibition. It is said that other arrests took place in Leningrad itself. The show did not go on.

One of the warming things about the Glezer interview was the almost whimsically indulgent view he was able to take of his oppressors, as if he had to admit it isn't *their* fault they're so dim. Here is his description of the very first public exhibition of 'unofficial art' in 1967:

> The exhibition opened on 22 January and despite the fact that it was 20 degrees below zero centigrade, a huge queue built up on the pavements outside before the opening. The room was so crammed you couldn't move inside it. During the course of the exhibition I was approached from behind by someone who said to me: 'Don't you see what's going on here?' I said, 'What's the matter?' And he said that he was a representative of the District Party Committee. And I explained to him that as far as I could see the only thing going on was an exhibition and that people had come and were in fact looking at pictures. And he said, 'But can't you hear that foreign languages are being spoken here?' And I said I was sorry but there was too much noise going on and in any case I didn't speak any foreign languages.

Baffled by this cute response, the flunkey took Glezer off to the Director's office to be grilled by a major of the KGB, who immediately denounced him as a 'weapon of the CIA'. To clinch his accusation,

> he beckoned me to the window and told me to look outside. Unfortunately the frost was so thick that the window was completely impenetrable. He none the less told me that there were over 20 foreign motor cars outside in the street and that this was proof that the thing had been organized by the CIA.

Smart sleuthing. Smart enough, anyway, to panic the gallery director into closing down the show; it lasted two hours and was seen by 2,000 people. After that, Glezer began collecting the works of banned artists and turned his flat into a museum of unofficial art – anyone could drop in and take a look. He also tried mounting another public exhibition. A campaign of harassment instantly got under way; both he and his wife were forced out of work, his books were withdrawn from circulation and the familiar pattern began of press attacks supported by regular visits from the cops. Something had to happen soon, and in 1974 Glezer made it happen. With Rabin he planned the now-famous open-air event. He took care to announce the show two weeks in advance and on 25 September, banned artists from all over turned up at a patch of waste ground on the outskirts of Moscow and began setting up their easels. The upshot is well known.

On *Panorama* (BBC-1) last Monday, Anthony Crosland was asked what he thought about the current health of the Helsinki spirit. As if it physically pained him to admit it, Crosland thought that perhaps things hadn't quite worked out the way everyone had hoped. Why, he was then asked, didn't the PM want to see Bukovsky? Crosland was delighted to get it on the record that two appointments had been made 'with Foreign Office ministers' but that Bukovsky hadn't kept either of them. But then 'he's had a ghastly time in the last few years, heaven knows'. David Dimbleby didn't bother to repeat the question, any more than he bothered to repeat any of the other questions Crosland didn't answer.

Mervyn Jones's *Holding On* (LWT) made a conventionally gritty start on Sunday night, with many a cloth-capped, toil-worn figure trudging across cobbles for a natter in The General Gordon. The local harridan peeps out at them from behind her lace curtains and newcomers are not lightly welcomed in this proud little community of dockers. So far, so utterly familiar. Docker's widow marries white-collared insurance man; adjustment problems proliferate – with her kids ('I ain't gonna call him dad. I ain't gonna call anyone dad'), with the street, with his snooty work-mates. The episode ends with her oldest boy, Charlie, beating a schoolmate's head against the cobbles. Presumably, saga-wise, he's the one we're looking out for.

A more genteel view of delinquency was the same night on offer in an excellent BBC-1 production of *The Winslow Boy*. Terence Rattigan gets sneered at as a formula playwright, and it's true that he does tend to construct 'scenes' before your very eyes. But it's all so deftly paced and so reassuringly convinced of our attention that there's a real pleasure in watching him do *exactly* what you know he's going to do. In other words, It's Not so Easy as it Looks. On-form performances from Alan Badel, Eric Porter and Michele Dotrice; as to Jonathan Scott-Taylor as the boy – I don't know, I think he did it.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Old Outlook

Separate Tables *Apollo*
Sizwe Bansi is Dead *Royal Court*

Just about every dramatist I have heard of, or have not heard of, seems to have been commissioned to write, adapt or translate a play for the new National Theatre; and, indeed, Mr Hall's postbox must by now be resounding with the patter of tiny scripts, not all of them doomed to or deserving of infanticide. But isn't it time he and his henchmen remembered that some of our contemporaries have already produced – I hesitate to say their best work, since while there's life there's always hope of better – but work worth rediscovery? Sooner or later, they are going to have to face the question of Terence Rattigan, such a power in the post-war British theatre and, it may be, too harshly treated when the critical tumbrils rolled out in the mid-Fifties. *The Winslow Boy*, his most celebrated piece, may be safely left to those reps which straggle out their subsidies by re-animating exam texts for local fifth-formers. But it would be nice to take a proper look at *The Deep Blue Sea*, perhaps even at *Variations*

Joan Downar

Presences

The clumsy beginner snaps
a vacation: 'He was round
the corner at the time.'

And round the corner, in air,
or the hour, are users
of warm tools, unattended

engines, clever computers;
or, going further back,
hay-fields at mid-day, forests

at night; or nearer, sunk
cushions, caved bed,
lipped cup. A room,

once occupied, is never
empty again, and earth's
room's crowded. Somewhere

a wheezing cuckoo actually
shoulders its space in the nest,
and the sent notes are proof,

just as the silver torque
left by a snake guarantees
that the king is alive.

And if you turn the snap
in your hand, your'e convinced
you'll see
the chap on the other side.

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on a Theme. Certainly, the present revival of *Separate Tables* should remind the open-minded that Rattigan can write with some sensitivity and passion of the frazzled loners who people his peculiar corner of the English menagerie.

Of course, both halves of the double-bill date, technically and otherwise. The Bournemouth hotel where they jointly occur has its quota of stock characters, including an improbably wise manageress, a tweedy lady punter and even a comic maid, adenoidally chatting up the long-suffering guests over their Brown Windsor. An invitation to discuss intimate business in the office, which is not on the designer's schedule, is predictably but illogically rejected in favour of the public lounge, which is. The awesomely-whispered 'do you know she takes *drugs*?', apropos the protagonist of play one, turns out to refer to sleeping pills, of all things. The hideous scandal that so appals the clientele in play two involves not rape, mutilation, murder, cannibalism, or any of the other horrors with which the Bond era has familiarised us, but a bit of nudge and tickle in a cinema. But then this is 1954, when the Lord Chamberlain was still snug in St James's and his kith and kin supreme in the stalls. And something does reach across from that period to this: a sympathy for the weak, furtive, and unappetising; a wry eye for the middle class in decline and gentility in decay.

But less effectively in the first play than in the second. It may be possible to believe in the vain, brittle divorcée who treks down from London in search of lost love. In fact, it is possible, since Jill Bennett plays her intelligently, as someone who knows how to squelch the more obvious symptoms of self-pity and, indeed, has acquired a certain bravado *in extremis*. The trouble is the ex-husband she's trying to re-enlist, a disgraced left-wing politician now contributing boozy polemics to the *New Outlook*, a journal which, briefly flashed onstage, looked uncomfortably familiar to yours truly. Let me hasten to add that I'm not objecting to John Mills's baggy trousers, adrift tie, unkempt jowls and general air of having been marinated for months. After all, that's standard uniform at Great Turnstile. But when this 'roaring savage from the slums of Hull' (as he likes to call himself) starts bawling 'damn you, damn and blast you!' at the hotel proprietor, then hurls his ex-wife across the stage, and a little later is solemnly reassured by her that 'I want you because you're all the things I'm not', I felt that Sir Terence was demonstrating his inexperience of Hull, left-wing politicians, the NS and people in emotional disarray. The play combines bedside compassion for the lonely and troubled with an exasperating tendency to be melodramatic.

Not so its sequel, which gives Mr Mills a spruce blazer and a hail-fellow voice, and Miss Bennett ginger straw for hair, pale, pinched cheeks and shoes so relentlessly sensible you expect them to start waggling their brown leather tongues and delivering lectures on ethics. They make an awkward, rather pathetic pair of friends, he a bogus major, she the neurotic dupe of a monster-mother, all self-righteous protectiveness and triumphant malice when he's caught fumbling at women in the local Odeon. Is there something a bit slick about Rattigan's handling of this revelation, and of the genteel lynch-mob that promptly convenes, only to be disarmed by its victim's unexpected courage? Certainly one sometimes suspects that plot may be determining life rather than life plot. But Sir Terence's understanding of his two human failures is sufficiently authentic, and his feeling about human failure in general sufficiently strong, to keep the play's circulation pumping. 'I'm a freak, aren't I,' mumbles Miss Bennett at one point, and the answer wings firmly back:

> I never know what that word means. If you mean you're different from other people, then I suppose you're a freak. But all human beings are a bit different from each other, aren't they? The one thing I've learnt is that the word normal, applied to any human being, is utterly meaningless.

Conventional wisdom nowadays, expressed with due banality; but it means something to Rattigan, and he makes it matter to us.

Michael Blakemore's production is characteristically sane and clear, and the acting uniformly decent, if perhaps a little unambitious. Understatement is an overstated theatrical virtue nowadays, and it is good to see that one actress, at least, has no truck with it. Of course, the part of Mrs Railton-Bell demands rather special measures. She's the deadly matriarch of the hotel, large, pink and poisonous, a sort of human jellyfish, unburdened by the capacity for self-criticism or the need for self-justification or, indeed, the very flimsiest redeeming trait. She is, in short, a caricature; and the only thing to do with a caricature is to make it a rich one, a feat Margaret Courtenay achieves with spectacular success. Consider the degree of philistine condescension she casually injects into the four words, 'you and your music', and the prurient relish of her 'they've been making *love*', and the finely-timed contempt of her 'everyone's entitled to his opinions, no matter how odd or dangerous or distasteful they may be'. But if I went on, as I'm tempted, I'd have no space for *Sizwe Bansi*'s return to London, which must be briefly celebrated, if only to say that John Kani and Winston Tshona have become more professional, more technically accomplished without losing any of their energy and sly, watchful humour. If you want to know just why South Africa is simultaneously loathsome and laughable, a sick joke institutionalised as national policy, this is the human evidence.

Among this week's contributors:

MICHAEL DAVIE was this week chosen as Granada TV's *What The Papers Say* Journalist of the Year.

LORD BETHELL is author of *The Last Secret* (1974), a study of the repatriation of displaced Russians after World War II.

GODFREY HODGSON's book *In Our Time*, a study of the United States from World War II to Nixon, is to be published next month by Macmillan.

PAUL THEROUX's new collection of short stories, *The Consul's File*, will be published this spring.

Films

David Wilson

Sounds Funny

Silent Movie *Odeon Haymarket and Odeon Kensington*
Spite Marriage *Electric Cinema from Sunday*
Norman . . . Is That You? *Ritz*

The best joke about *Silent Movie* is that it must be the noisiest film since *Earthquake*. The soundtrack thunders with music and effects, like a fire-cracker let loose in an orchestra pit. But no one speaks, the verbal gags being rendered by titles, with the single-word exception of Marcel Marceau, who does a cameo mime and as a silent movie in himself is – logically – allowed a word in edgeways. The joke is typical of the Mel Brooks method. A hit-and-miss farceur, he has tended (except in the sustained hysteria of the Hitler show-stopper in *The Producers*) to play simultaneously to the front stalls and the gallery, leaving the rest of us wondering why we've missed the trick. Here, in his best offering to date, there's something for everybody.

Brooks himself is Mel Funn, a Hollywood director down on drink and luck. Funn works for Big Picture Studios, about to be swallowed by the corporate Engulf and Devour (the Paramount chiefs will relish the pun), and proposes rescue in the shape of a speechless epic. With cohorts Eggs (Marty Feldman) and Bell (Don DeLuise), Funn sets about recruiting names, while the corporate bosses (motto: 'Our fingers are in everything') try to smash the picture. Funn's fun is cumulative, if patchy. The studio chief (Sid Caesar), who smokes a double-barrelled cigar, wonders whether slapstick isn't dead and is answered by the comprehensive wrecking of his executive suite. A monster fly, catapulted from the roof of an Acme Pest Control van, lands in someone's soup (title: 'Waiter . . . etc.'). A night-club chanteuse is peeled out of a man-size banana. An inspired musical whimsy finds Brooks and the siren hired to snare him dancing messily down the creamy tiers of a giant wedding cake. Sight gags proliferate, at a pace appropriate for a wordless event. They don't all register, but there are enough of them for that not to matter. The only serious miscalculations are the guest spots – Burt Reynolds, Anne Bancroft, Paul Newman *et al.* guying themselves to less than endearing effect.

From a cod silent movie to the genuine article. *Spite Marriage* was the last of Keaton's silent films, made for MGM by Edward Sedgwick in 1929 and rarely seen since. Reportedly, Keaton tried to persuade the studio to add sound: 'It needn't be one long yak-yak. There's nothing wrong with sound that a little silence won't cure.' As it is, the only sound to be heard now is an accompanying farrago of Satie piano pieces, less obtrusive than some of the tinkling tunes added to other such revivals but still distracting. Noise apart, one must report that this is not vintage Buster. Our hero, a

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trouser-presser, conceives a grand passion for a celebrated actress, watching her every performance from the front row of the stalls in formal attire borrowed from his customers. To spite her wayward lover, the actress (Dorothy Sebastian, fainting and flouncing at every turn) shunts a bewildered Buster into marriage. A startlingly inconsequential plot-twist then has him shanghaied by bootleggers, from whose clutches he finally and inimitably rescues his bride on a sinking yacht. A hero in spite of himself, Buster gets the girl for real.

The yacht scenes are a throwback to *The Navigator*, impossible acrobatics included, but not including any of that film's sublime lunacy. The essence of Keaton's grave antics is that they only look impossible: catastrophes are avoided by stupendous accidents of fate and timing. Here the comedy looks worked-on, and the gags trips over themselves as often as their perpetrator. Where Keaton's best films have a splendid symmetry of intention and disaster, *Spite Marriage* is all fits and starts, each sequence promising more than it delivers. The Great Stone Face looks a little sad, and leaves us feeling the same.

A comedy both black and gay is something else again, a case of hedging your bets in the minorities market. The single joke of *Norman . . . Is That You?* is that strapping young black Norman is shacked up in a lavender-tinted pad with the fetching Garson, who is limp-wristed and white. Norman's father (Redd Foxx) descends from downhome Tucson and likes it not. 'How many lumberjacks you know with purple drapes?' he growls, while trying to rouse his errant offspring with a six-foot hooker hired for a night under the flowered sheets. Also mincing through is a glove-puppet freak who does a turn or two when the pace flags, played (I kid you not) by one Wayland Flowers. A few snappy lines survive from Broadway, whence the piece should never have strayed. George Schlatter directs as though it hadn't.

The French cinema has lost two notables in a week. Henri-Georges Clouzot, specialist in *grand guignol*, made his mark during the war with *Le Corbeau*, an edgy study of French provincial manners wrecked by poison-pen letters. Later films included the sombre detective thriller *Quai des Orfèvres*; an inventive art documentary, *Le Mystère de Picasso*; and, alas, Bardot on trial in that lumbering courtroom melodrama *La Vérité*. But Clouzot will be better remembered as a master of shock and suspense. No one who dared watch that scene in *Les Diaboliques*, when the eye-rolling 'corpse' rose from the bath, is likely to forget it; nor that explosive drive over the mountains in *The Wages of Fear*, the cliff-hanger to end them all. And a final bow to Henri Langlois, founder, director and maverick animator of the Paris Cinémathèque. Autocratic, devious, eccentric, Langlois was less an archivist than a collector, and he collected every film he could get hold of. It was a policy proved in retrospect: under his tutelage the New Wave saw the movies – mostly American – which formed their style. Resnais, Godard, Truffaut and the rest owed a lot to Langlois, and so do we all.

John Coleman is on holiday

Architecture

Andrew Saint

Orange County

Sanity and balance can be in short supply when Southern California comes within the purview of outsiders, especially Englishmen. On one side stand the detractors, unable to conceal their aversion to a culture that owes little to the classic canons of order and beauty; on the other, the enthusiasts who hail Los Angeles, warts, Watts and all, as a *Gesammtkunstwerk*. In either view there is more than a note of the ancient British vice of patronising other cultures as a method of self-defence, in fact as a way of refusing to learn. It is a note that sounds even in Reyner Banham's witty and perspicacious *Los Angeles* (1971, reissued in Pelican at £1.25), by far the best introduction to the built environment of Southern California. Banham's book veers deftly but oddly between two separate subjects. One is the celebration of those outward and visible signs by which foreigners identify Southern California: hamburger stands, surf boards, parking lots, customised cars, in short everything that can be summed up as freeway culture and that belongs as much to the Mid as the Far West. The other is the recounting of the inward and spiritual history of modern domestic architecture in the area, from Irving Gill through Greene and Greene, Lloyd Wright, and the Viennese exiles Schindler and Neutra, to the fashionable heroes of Banham's generation, sophisticated box-builders like Charles Eames and Craig Ellwood. The first theme is treated brilliantly if patchily, the second with due sobriety, reverence and orthodoxy.

Yet what ought to strike any visitor to Southern California are not the one-off architect-designed houses, nor yet the modest little boxes by the freeways on which Banham dwells so fondly, but the remarkably high standards of modern middle-to-upper-income speculative housing. These standards are sufficiently high to make any self-respecting English architect weep. Most of the houses are not markedly original, nor are they brash, nor even again particularly quaint. They are just honestly convenient and comfortable and modestly picturesque, and they seem to improve all the time. The style of these houses might be called Orange County Domestic, and Newport Beach in Orange County is probably the best place to see it.

Orange County needs a bit of explanation. At about the time Banham's book was first published, the fulcrum of Southern California appears to have taken a decided shift to the south. Orange County lies halfway between two internationally known follies: Disneyland in the north, sited at Anaheim among the outer suburbs of Los Angeles proper, and the one-time 'Western White House' at San Clemente in the south, 'seat' of Richard M. Nixon. Orange County is of course Nixon County, and the Orange County boom may be dated back to Nixon's inauguration in 1969.

The site of the boom has been the Irvine Ranch, a vast privately owned tract which originally extended to 83,000 acres. Seeing that the time was ripe, the Irvine Foundation formed a company in the Sixties and began to develop much of the ranch for high-income housing. To start with, they concentrated on the outlying areas of the prosperous coastal community of Newport Beach, a smart place of resort ever since the railroad arrived 70 years ago. The company then lured a campus of the University of California into the area, and in 1970 they announced their plan for the new town of Irvine, which is scheduled eventually to house 500,000 people, more than Brasilia.

There is much to be said against Irvine. It has been planned without regard to social equity or public transport. Its only real point of focus is a shopping plaza handsomely set on a hill above Newport Beach with a few special buildings by William L. Pereira, the Irvine Company's architect. Perhaps focus is not so important in the loosely defined communities of Southern California, but it is the inland areas rather than the well-serviced coastal strip that need shopping centres. These inland areas are not yet encouraging; they are dominated by a sparse succession of large boxes set in capacious grounds, many of them scarcely identifiable as office, warehouse or factory. This is the industrial park where the many firms attracted from all over the country to Irvine have their premises, and despite its isolation amidst agricultural land much of the coastal community is glad to work here in preference to taking the clogged freeway to Los Angeles. Orange County Airport, now reputedly the busiest in the whole of the US in terms of flight movements, is right next door, and the private Cessna or company plane will quickly whisk you away whereever you want to go in California. But all this is planned for the executive. There is little or no low-income housing scheduled for Irvine, and the poorer people who service the place have to get there as best they may, from far-flung suburbs.

None of this, however, can detract from the excellence of the housing that has been built by developers under the Irvine Company's auspices upon the bluffs overlooking Upper Newport Bay. Here, along curling roads with futuristic names, can be seen example after example of the traditional California single-storey dwelling. Nearly touching at the sides so as to get as much width as they can from their plots (which average about 80 feet in breadth), they come almost up to the street in a way which no English house with a similar price-tag would ever do. There is no garden wall, and only 10 or 15 feet of grass between the pavement and the front of the house. The façade as often as not will give away nothing; the entrance will be in shadow, with only the bare two- or three-car garage door next to it. Here, though, the passer-by may get some inkling of the inhabitants, for in California the garage is second only in significance to the automobile. Frequently its automatic door will be up, and some tow-haired youth will be exposed

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tinkering with a motorbike or stowing up the RV (Recreational Vehicle) for a weekend in the mountains. Even with the door shut, the kids may be taking a shot at the basketball hoop that is regularly fixed over it.

Once the façade has been penetrated, it will almost inevitably reveal a central court or patio, with the main house at the back and one or two wings coming forward to enclose the whole. The court will be as spacious as possible, even at the expense of the back garden, and will probably contain a swimming pool. It is all rather like the *atrium* villas of the ancient world – and this is not coincidence. Modern California houses of this type derive from traditional ranch houses common long ago in Spain, built flush with the street, with blank faces to the front but generous patios within. The old houses were low because the adobe of which they were made could bear little weight; today a simple wood frame over a concrete raft suffices to carry thin prefabricated walls that can easily withstand California temperatures.

So at Newport Beach the ranch-style house, after some harsh usage by romantic California designers of the earlier 20th century, has come back to its original context, the Hispanic street front. Are these homes then the self-conscious designs of architects? Some of them certainly are, but most of them probably started off in a pattern book of the kind that you can easily buy in California. One such is *Homes by Hiawatha*, published by Hiawatha Estes and Associates, with 47 closely-packed pages of capable house designs in plan and perspective, including 'ranch homes'. What has happened here is that the builders, developers and architects (often the same person rolled into one) have picked over these kinds of designs and built them so many times that a new kind of vernacular architecture has emerged. It is rather like some of the bigger speculative developments of Victorian London, with the Irvine Company featuring as the powerful urban landlord. But there is one big difference: the Irvine Company will not obtain the reversion of these houses, for though most are built on leases of 60 years or so, the lessee has the option of purchasing the freehold.

With or without the freehold, these houses change hands for astonishing sums. Along Evening Star Lane, a cul-de-sac with a creek behind it where yachts can be moored, $395,000 is asked for the freehold of a four-bedroom house on a plot of only 61½ feet by 100 feet. With no sign of recession in Orange County, it is scarcely surprising that the realtors of Newport Beach put out every week a 'multiple listing book' as thick as a London Telephone Directory. Property values in Orange County have doubled and even trebled in the last few years. It is a poor look-out for the lower income groups, even those outside the Irvine city limits.

Nevertheless Newport Beach has many lessons that we could learn from, chief among them that the happiest and most acceptable domestic design stems from traditional forms and expressions, in California as much as elsewhere. It is not a conclusion, one feels, that would entirely appeal to the Banham view of such things.

54388

Weekend Competition

No 2447 **Set by Wysteria**

There is an eatery in London's Camden Town called Beckett's Fish Shop. What do they serve there? Happy Dace? Whiting for Godot? Competitors are asked to envision the wares of a Dickens Bakery, a Hopkins Haberdashery – and so on. Entries by 28 January.

No 2444 **Set by Snubbin**

Dismissive triads, along the lines of Churchill's characterisation of the navy as 'rum, sodomy and the lash'.

Report **by Spiro Keats**

A rotter of a comp in most respects, I fear (having read the entries, we all ran off and hit Fat Jeff a lot, under the quite mistaken impression that he had set it). On reflection, too, the Churchill triplet itself isn't really very funny or good, so I don't blame you all for struggling. The noble Stanley J. Sharpless clearly worked his heart out for me, and he gets £6. £1 per triad thereafter.

CHRISTMAS: Booze, bullshit and the box. FLEET STREET: Lies, damned lies and vital statistics. PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Arnold, angst and acne. TUC: Liberty, fraternity and differentials. CINEMA: Corn, porn and yawn. EDUCATION: Chalk, sweat and Boyson.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF TODAY: Some dogma, less charity and no Latin. The NEW STATESMAN: The Competition, Garland and a lot of padding. MINICABS: Late, expensive and lost.

C. VITA-FINZI

THE LABOUR PARTY: Foot, mouth and handouts. THE FOREIGN OFFICE: Old Boys, monolinguists, and exotic fruits. BRITISH RAIL: Rusty buffers, expensive gaffers, and not enough puffers.

MORAY MCGOWAN

THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL: Faith, Hope, and Parity. OPEC: Polygyny, Islam, and Shoplifting.

TIM HOPKINS

THE RAF: Hangars, bangers and clangers. MASSEUSES: Tubbers, rubbers and scrubbers.

JOHN BENNETT

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE: Hash, bash and hush.

ANDREW PAUL

PRIVATE EYE: Palpable hits, palpable shits, and very palpable writs. THE CITY: Tip off, rip off, and nip off.

TOM DONNELLY

JOURNALISM: Grubbing, Subbing and Pubbing. ULSTER UNIONISM: Arms, Armagh & Armageddon.

RUSSELL LUCAS

We wish to apologise for misprints in two of last week's poems. In Wolf Biermann's Brecht, Your Posterity, *line six should have read 'Smugly and Snugly' and the last words of stanza five should have read 'At last/Man has become to Wolf a wolf'. The two printer's errors in D. J. Enright's* A Missionary Unfrocked *were caused by late resetting.*

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Tony Miles
Chess

No 17 **Championship Play**

The combined World and European Junior Championships tournament, played at Groningen, Holland, was won by Mark Diesen of the USA with 10/13. Half a point behind came a previously unknown Czech player Ftacnik, who takes the European title, and in 3rd place was the Israeli, former world cadet champion, Grinberg. Sharing fourth place were Vladimirov (USSR), who started with 7/8 but then collapsed and managed only three draws from his last five games, Leow (Singapore), Campora (Argentina) and Susniega (Mexico).

The British Champion, Jonathan Mestel, who finished 3rd last year, had a terrible tournament, was never in contention, and finished 11th equal with 7½ points. This is the first time since 1971 that an English representative has failed to take a medal.

In the women's world championship series, the 'other' interzonal, held in Tbilisi, Georgia (USSR) was won by Fatalibekova (USSR) with 7/10 – she thus gains the women's GM title – ahead of Chiburdanidze and Kozlovskaya (both USSR) 6½.

The pairings for the candidates matches are Alexandria v Chiburdanidze, Levibna v Kushnir, Fatalibekova v Kozlovskaya, Achmilovskaya v Lematchko or van der Mije. Of the three non-Russians both Kushnir (Israel) and Lematchko (Bulgaria) are of Soviet origin.

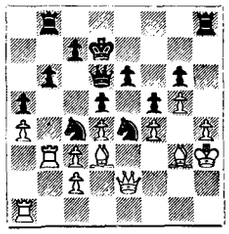
It is interesting that Chiburdanidze was previously eliminated at the zonal stage of the competition, and the Georgians only offered to stage the tournament in order to get her back into the series (the host country is allowed a free place under a dubious F.I.D.E. rule – though on this occasion they managed to acquire yet another place for Zatulovskaya who was also elminated in her zonal). It is also peculiar that there were only 11 players – especially since 'additional' players are only supposed to be introduced to give an even number – at Tbilisi while 14 played in Roosendaal.

This week's game is the young Russian Oleg Romanishin's powerful demolition of ex-world champion Vassily Smyslov.

White: O. Romanishin. Black: V. Smyslov.

1. P-K4, P-K4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. B-N5, P-QR3; 4. B-R4, P-Q3; 5. 0-0, B-Q2; 6. P-B4, N-B3; 7. N-B3, B-N5 (to prevent 8. P-Q4. Probably 7 . . . P-KN3 is better); **8. P-KR3, B x N; 9. Q x B, P-KN3** (inconsistent – either 9 . . . B-K2 or 9 . . . N-Q2 is preferable); **10. P-Q4!, N-Q2; 11. P x P, N(Q2) x P; 12. Q-K2, B-N2; 13. B-K3, 0-0; 14. QR-Q1, N-R4** (Black's position is already bad and this move looks wrong, but it is difficult to suggest a constructive alternative); **15. P-B5, P-QN4; 16. P x P ep, P x P; 17. N-Q5, N(K4)-B5; 18. B-Q4, P-QN4; 19. B x B, K x B; 20. P-QN4!, P x B; 21. P x N, N x P; 22. R-QB1** (the black position is now a complete wreck, and a few quiet positional moves suffice to force resignation), **P-R6; 23. Q-Q2, R-QN1; 24. Q-B3 ch, K-R3** (or 24 . . . P-B3; 25. N-B7); **25. N-B6, P-N4; 26. P-B4, P x P; 27. R x P, Resigns.**

Problem 17:
Black to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 2 February.



Solution to problem 15: 1. K-B3, P-R7; 2. K-N2, P-B6; 3. P-N6!, P-B7; 4. P-N7, P-R8=Q ch!; 5. K x Q, P-B8=Q; 6. P-N8=Q, K-B7 ch; 7. K-R2, Q-B5 ch; 8. K-R3, Q-B6 ch; 9. K-R4, Q-R8 ch; 10. K-N5, Q-N8 ch; 11. K-R6!, Q x Q, stalemate.

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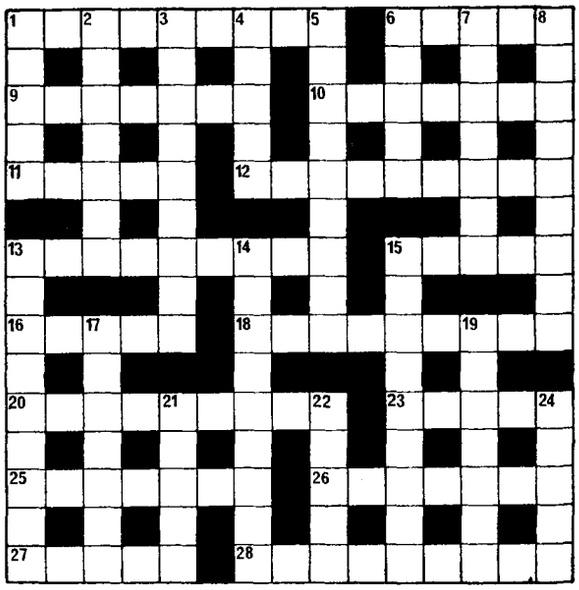
Weekend Crossword 1199

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1199, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 1 Feb.



ACROSS

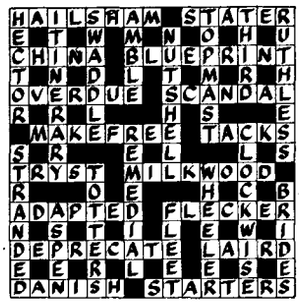
1. Studies a piece of furniture as an artist (9).
6. Excavated material back to front (5).
9. Poor violinist as one who does violence to the little science he has (7).
10. Survive others but fail to carry one's bat? (7).
11. Stick for employees (5).
12. As a tourist she gets involved with tigers (9).
13. It is cutting when some sing about the start of revolution (9).
15. Joint which starts trailing in the mud (5).
16. In France they hold a party for recipients of great honour (5).
18. Where many soldiers are killed behind a tree (9).
20. Insidious form of delivery (9).
23. Sing with a song in the heart (5).
25. Animal about to steal is an agile one (7).
26. O— about O is not very promising (7).
27. Disfigurements in all honesty esteemed (5).
28. Sends down broken steel gear (9).

DOWN

1. Moulds or throws (5).
2. Peer goes up before half-term to tell the story (7).
3. Kind expressions provided by an important part of the press (9).
4. Buildings apart from us (5).
5. Beheaded criminal punished and stretched (9).
6. Composition discovered in a remote territory (5).
7. Those most closely related live in the home (7).
8. The tender get spoilt for the cleaner (9).
13. Courts which give one something to eat amid the proceedings (9).
14. Material Arab tales are translated into (9).
15. The skill in my circle is killing on principle (9).
17. Tidy soldier (7).
19. The skin exposed in place of retreat (7).
21. Dress with decoration worn in the centre (5).
22. Jester makes master look up and start laughing (5).
24. 'For loan oft —— both itself and friend' (*Hamlet*) (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1197



Prizewinners to No 1197

G. H. Cowan (Stanmore)
J. F. Kahn (Switzerland)
N. C. Wormleighton (Uckfield)

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Vol. 93 No. 2392

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Theatres

ALMOST FREE THEATRE, 9 Rupert St, W1. 01-485 6224. Open. 10 Jan. 'Patty Hearst' by William Tanner. 1.15 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

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Poetry

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JULIAN BRANSTON & Richard Reynolds read their poetry 26 Jan. 7 p.m. National Book League, 7 Albermarle St, London W1. 01-493 9001.

AN EVENING OF POETRY & Music to celebrate Aquarius No 9, Derek Mahon, Charles Walsh, Paul Boyle, Oliver Mulligan. Duke of Wellington, Balls Pond Rd. Thurs. 27 Jan. 8.30. 50p.

Exhibitions

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile WC1. 405 9836. Original lithographs by Lowry, Moore, Boyd. 18th & 19th century prints by Daumier, Gavarni, Bonington etc.

FELIX H. MAN: Pioneer of photo-journalism. 20 Jan.-13 Feb. Mon.-Fri. 10-6, Sats. 10-1. Admission free. National Book League, 7 Albemarle St, W1. 01-493 9001. Nearest tubes, Green Park & Piccadilly Circus.

Meetings

ASSN OF LABOUR COUNCILLORS – Joel Barnett on 'Priorities in Public Expenditure' (Labour Party Local Government Conference fringe meeting) at Crown Hotel, Harrogate, 5.45 p.m. Sat. 29 Jan. Non-members welc.

YOUNG FABIAN GROUP. Tues. 25 Jan. Brian Lapping of Granada: 'TV & Politics'. 8 p.m. 11 Dartmouth St, SW1. All welc.

MORRIS' MEDIAEVAL BOOKS, Kelmscott House Colloquy, William Morris Centre, 26 Upper Mall, W6, Saturday 12 Feb. 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. £3.00 (inc. buffet lunch). 01-748 5618.

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DAME MARGARET COLE will be lecturing on 'The History of the Fabian Society, its Importance & Relevance' on Sun. 6 Feb. 3 p.m. at: National Museum of Labour History, Limehouse Town Hall, Commercial Road, London E14. Admission Free. The Museum will be open from 2-3 p.m. & 4.15-6 p.m. For details tel. 515 3229. This important lecture should not be missed.

'THE ARCHITECTURAL SETTING of the Mevlevi Rite': Lecture by Dr James Dickie, 20 Jan. 7 p.m. at Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. (Room 7/8) Adm. 50p (Society members free).

GREAT PHILOSOPHERS. Survey of Western Philosophy including Plato, Spinoza, Kant. Programme devised and led by Kishor Parekh. Commencing 7 p.m. Thurs. 10 Feb. at the Theosophical Society, 50 Gloucester Place, W1 (01-935 9261).

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'The article (by David Astor) is a lie,' Bill Barnes, NATSOPA chapel, The Times.

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Department of German, Public Lectures, 2 p.m. Adm. free. 27 Jan. 'Art as a Religious Activity from Winckelmann to Schiller' by Dr Nicholas Boyle.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. Admission free. 25 Jan. 'Scientific Ballooning' by Professor R. E. Jennings; 27 Jan. 'Spanish Riding School' (White Horses of Vienna) and 'How to Ride a Horse' (Goofy – Disney Cartoon).

RICHARD COBB, Professor of Modern History at Oxford University, will give a lecture on 'Le monde urbain de Raymond Queneau', followed by the film 'Zazie dans le métro' (Louis Malle, 1960 sub-titled) on Tuesday 25 January at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, London SW7. tel: 01-589 6211 ext 38. Adm. free.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Steve Carter, of the City University, on 'The Politics of Solzhenitsyn', 26 Jan. 7.30 p.m. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. Collection: all welc.

'BREAKDOWN OR BREAKTHROUGH': James Robertson, author of 'Power, Money & Sex' discusses the search for a sustainable future with the Socialist Environment & Resources Assoc. Parl. Group. H. of C. Grand Comm. Rm. 25 Jan. 6.30. All welc.

'THE MAGIC IN HESSE'S WORK', Lecture by Professor Hans Mayer, Tübingen. Monday, 31 January 1977, at 6.30 p.m., Imperial College, Mechanical Engineering Building, Lecture Theatre A, Exhibition Road, London SW7. Sponsored by the Goethe-Institut London. Admission Free.

MAPAM, 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6. Sun. 23 Jan., 8.15. Speaker: I. Nathani (President), 'Israel's Elections to 9th Knesset'.

ALBANIA'S VIITH CONGRESS. Report back by Reg Birch, Chairman, Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), delegate to Albania's VIIth Congress. Friday 21 Jan. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. WC1. 7.30 p.m.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 54 Holland Park, W11. Sun. 23 Jan. 'The Light of Lights' by Swami Bhavyananda at 5 p.m. All welcome. Vedanta mag. 40p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 22 Jan. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 25 Jan. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 26 Jan. 6.30 p.m. 'Mahayana & Theravada Buddhism'. Two separate Study Classes. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy. Sun. 23 Jan. 8 p.m. S.a.e. for free pamphlet, book list, programme of talks. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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